ONE WORLD

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY

Volume 5 Spring 2009

OneWorld Magazine
Saint Louis University
Issue 5, Vol. 1
Spring 2009

MAGAZINE STAFF

Editor-in-Chief: Lauren Hashiguchi

Senior Editor: Johanna Hemminger

Copy Editors:
Courtney Bobsin
Brittany Calendo
Amanda Dwyer
Becky Grout
Allison Hotze
Monica Kao
Laura Plack
Sanjana Ravi

Design:
Brittany Accardi
Megan Buchheit
Lauren Hashiguchi
Johanna Hemminger
Allison Hotze
Caroline Hoyniak
Stephanie Kunz
Sarah Markenson

ORGANIZATION STAFF

Creator/Visionary: Jesse Sullivan
President: Manuela Rodriguez
Vice President: Mike Reddy
Service and Events: Jessica Trout

Staff Advisor: Jason L. Young

Faculty Advisor: Michelle Lorenzini

* Article on p.27 by Sarah Fentem

Cover photo courtesy of junior Christopher Hampson. He met the woman pictured in Tepecoyo, El Salvador while studying abroad. When the photo was taken, she was nearly 101 years old.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Readers,

OneWorld continues to expand both as magazine and a service organization. This year, OneWorld continued its mission by engaging students in dialogue about issues of social justice. We hosted discussion groups about homelessness, poverty, and women in the prison system, and OneWorld member Jessica Trout graciously organizing Immigration Week which generated student dialogue in the SLU community about immigration. Furthermore, we were able to bring SLU alumnus Thomas Gill to campus to speak to the student body about his experiences with immigration in El Salvador.

Our goal is always to deepen and expand our message of social justice to the SLU community. We encourage you to continue learning about and experiencing your world. SLU has a passionate student body who continues to share their stories and raise awareness about issues confronting our brothers and sisters around the world.

OneWorld deeply appreciates and values the dedication of all of our mentors and advisors. We would like to sincerely thank OneWorld's staff advisor, Jason L. Young. His guidance and dedication to this publication are vitally important to OneWorld. Michelle Lorenzini also continues to be a significant source of guidance for our organization. This year, OneWorld formed a special relationship with the Emerson Ethics Center and the Service Leadership Program. Tim Keane of the Emerson Ethics Center has been a tremendous resource, working closely with OneWorld to help us expand and improve our impact on our community. Next, we are especially grateful to Campus Progress and Youth Venture. Both organizations have been a great help to us this year as we move forward as a publication. David Spett, our Campus Progress advisor, has been an important source of guidance in the past year. Moreover, OneWorld could not continue to grow and improve without the generous support of Kent Porterfield and the office of Student Development.

Finally, we thank our student contributors for seeking to share their passion for social justice with our community. Our global community is shaped by the goals, choices, and actions of its individual members.

Sincerely,

The Editorial Board

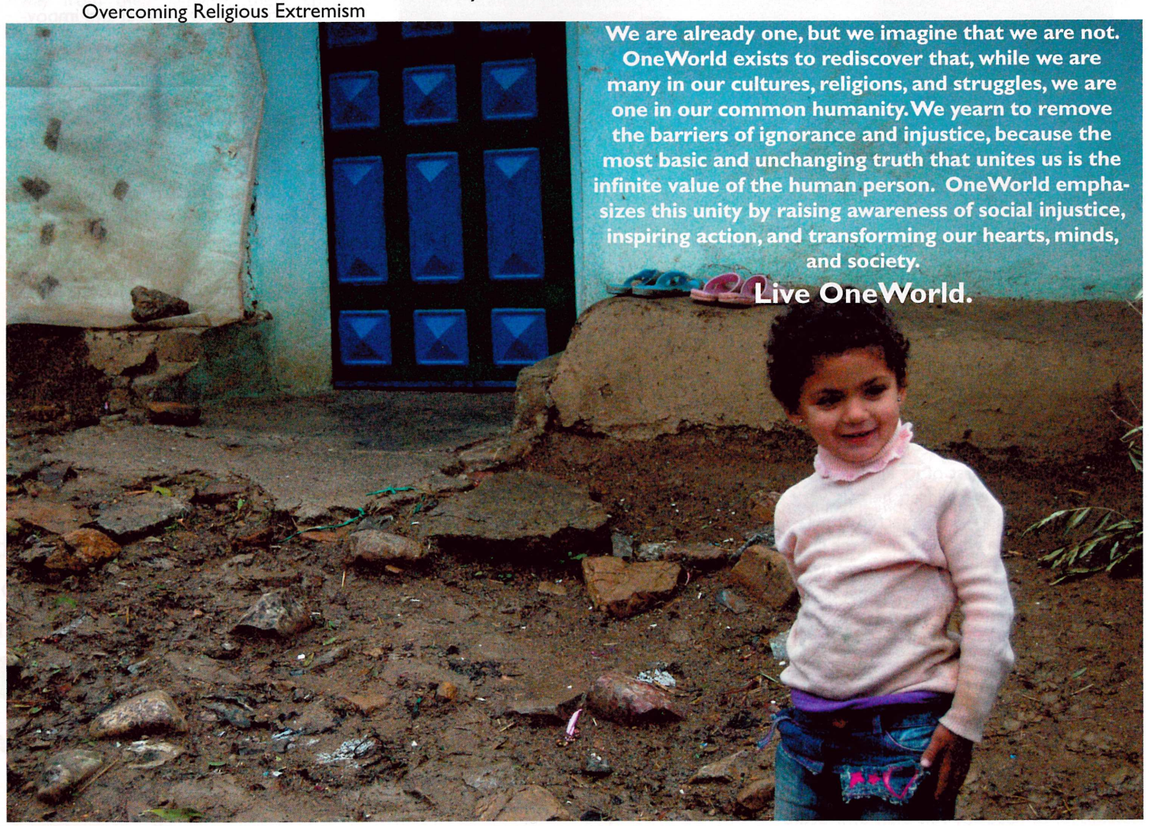
Made with the support of:

EMERSON ETHICS CENTER
JOHN COOK SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY

{CAMPUS ★ PROGRESS}

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4 The Uphill Battle: HIV/AIDS in India
6 Far from Home: A Refugee Living in St. Louis
8 The Silent Lesson: Homelessness in St. Louis
10 The Journey to the Other Side
12 The Rhetoric of Conflict
13 Obstructing Freedom: in the Occupied Territories
14 Norman's Story: Conversations with a Former Child Soldier
18 The Dividing Line: Overcoming Religious Extremism
20 A Hidden Exodus: The Iraqi Refugee Crisis
22 Crops in the City: Urban Farming
24 Take a Look
25 Salvadoran Scholarship News
26 After the Bell
27 Ten Easy Way Anyone Can Go Green
28 Volunteering in St. Louis
30 Faces of Nicaragua
32 Cameroon at a Glance
33 Five World Issues You Have Probably Never Heard Of
34 What Does it Mean to Live OneWorld?
36 Reflections of Chile
37 SLU OneWorld Blog
38 Only with Eyes to See: Finding True Solidarity in Guatemala
40 La Clinica
41 World Peace is Spelled CISV
42 Travels in China
44 Student Photo Page
46 Word Find
47 The Sound of Silence



We are already one, but we imagine that we are not. OneWorld exists to rediscover that, while we are many in our cultures, religions, and struggles, we are one in our common humanity. We yearn to remove the barriers of ignorance and injustice, because the most basic and unchanging truth that unites us is the infinite value of the human person. OneWorld emphasizes this unity by raising awareness of social injustice, inspiring action, and transforming our hearts, minds, and society.

Live OneWorld.

Photo courtesy of Tyler Porth

St. Louis Room HM671.054 Issues v.1

The Uphill Battle:
HIV/AIDS in India

by Mike Reddy

Photo courtesy of Mike Reddy

Snehadaan, founded by the Camillian religious order of Catholic priests, is a center for care and support of people with AIDS just outside of Bangalore, a city in the southern state of Karnataka. Although Snehadaan has a long history of providing a very high-level of care for adult patients from all over India, the center recently opened its children's wing, the first of its kind in India. The cross-section of children here is very indicative of the India's HIV-infected population of children as a whole. Many of the children have acquired the disease in utero from their own parents, the result of generations of forced prostitution or remarriages that only serves to spread the infection. Of the 20 children living in the center, about half of them had watched their parents die in the adult portion of the clinic, their parents often succumbing to tuberculosis, a disease long eradicated in the Western world. Some of the other children had acquired the disease through the perilous and horrific experience of living on the streets of Bangalore. Before their eighth birthday, a number of these children had worked as prostitutes or had been raped by strangers. One orphaned boy had miraculously eluded HIV infection and survived for months by begging on the streets until he was raped by an HIV-infected man. Due to his resulting infection, he is now a resident of Snehadaan with a severely limited life expectancy. This young man's journey is just one of the countless stories of child exploitation and infection in India. According to Susan Hunter in her book, AIDS in Asia: A Continent in Peril, "there are 250 million child laborers under the age of fourteen, more than half of whom work in Asia 'under appalling conditions, facing sexual abuse and even slavery.' Twenty percent of the children employed as domestic labor-

Mike Reddy is a senior studying Spanish, International Studies, Psychology and Pre-Medicine.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS: HIV/AIDS IN INDIA

Photo courtesy of United Nations

Half of the documented cases of HIV and AIDS infections in Asia are found in various locations in India. The number of cases has been rising due to the lack of resources and preventative measures for specific members of the population, particularly those living in rural and impoverished areas.

India's Vice President Hamid Ansari, author of the recent book Hopes Alive: Surviving AIDS and Despair, has called for special attention to such vulnerable groups, calling the HIV/AIDS challenge "widely accepted and undeniable." Further challenges include effective sex education and strategic planning in areas of high HIV/AIDS prevalence.

Source: Asia News International

> these children are vulnerable to physical, emotional, psychological and sexual abuse at the hands of their employers...

Photo courtesy of Mike Reddy

> A decrease in the prevalence of AIDS would create a ripple effect that would benefit all foundational aspects of the nation, from the economy to poverty rates..

ers, mostly girls, are 'often heavily exploited. Away from their families…these children are vulnerable to physical, emotional, psychological and sexual abuse at the hands of their employers." These children are turned out into the streets when they are deemed too old for exploitation, often before the age of 10. Without an awareness of their familial ties, these children are often on their own, forced into prostitution to stay alive. It is here, ironically, that many of them become infected with the disease that will eventually kill them. When these children become adolescents and begin having children of their own, the cycle of AIDS is propagated through the mother-child transmission of the disease. One of the biggest obstacles to preventing the spread of HIV in children and the lifestyle that may propagate the disease is the lack of preventative action by the Indian government. Although the government funds the purchase of HAART, the medicine presently used to treat HIV infection, for patients of clinics such as Snehadaan, it does little to eradicate the environment that breeds the disease itself. In 1999, the International Labour Organization unanimously adopted the "Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention" which was heralded as a "decisive step towards liberating scores of millions of children from slavery and debt bondage, prostitution and pornography, dangerous work and forcible recruitment for armed conflict." Ignoring the implications this convention would have for the elimination of HIV and the atmosphere in which it is bred, India refused to sign the accord. With a history of stagnancy and ineffectiveness on the part of the Indian government, much of the onus of treating, and preventing the spread of, the AIDS epidemic is left to international agencies. Indian-based national agencies are often overwhelmed by the task of providing sex and AIDS awareness education to over a billion people, about half of whom are illiterate. The international agencies that are called in to support these Indian organizations are often short-staffed, poorly funded, and spread out over a number of countries with equally difficult crises. Thus, the growing threat of the AIDS epidemic in India and its dire effect on the children of the country continues, in part, as a result of the indifference of the Indian government to the living conditions of its people. It is for this reason that the World Health Organization lists India as one of the three countries that accounts for 41% of the AIDS-related unmet need. It is an unfortunate truth that thousands of children are dying due to inefficiency and disorganization in anti-AIDS policies within India and the other developing countries of the world. According to Eileen Stillwaggon, author of AIDS and the Ecology of Poverty, "International AIDS policy continues to be ad hoc in approach, unscientific in conception, and narrow in focus. Current strategies for HIV prevention do not address the causes of susceptibility or the causes of behaviors and have been largely unsuccessful." The Indian government is guilty of a half-hearted attempt at treating a disease that it has barely tried to prevent. Government officials may have quite a daunting task ahead of them, but a decrease in the prevalence of AIDS in the country would create a ripple effect that would benefit all foundational aspects of the nation, from the economy to poverty rates. It is estimated that, by the year 2010, 41.6 million children in 23 developing nations will have lost one or both parents due to AIDS. Society cannot underestimate the amount of those children who have acquired and will acquire the disease themselves. It is these children who deserve an opportunity to succeed in a world that has written them off. It is these children who should never have suffered from the disease when there are so many preventative measures available. AIDS prevention should never be an afterthought for any nation, especially for a developing one. Rather, it should be at the forefront of policy and lawmaking in order to ensure that everyone has the right not only to life, but also to a meaningful and productive existence. There is a patch on the AIDS quilt that states, "In the future, when you look at the history books that will be written about AIDS you will find that one of the highlights of the book will be a chapter on one of the good results of the disease- that is- humanity became more compassionate. From that compassion, the world became a better place." It is this compassion that has created real and tangible improvements in the lives of people with HIV and AIDS across the world and will go on to make a difference for those who have not yet been as fortunate.

Far from Home:

The Story of a Refugee Living in St. Louis

An interview by Drew Thomas

Justin Biganiro Serugo, a refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo, was forced to flee his country due to an ongoing war. After many years of uncertainty, he found himself living in Saint Louis. His story is one of fear and confusion, but a testament showing how much life can be positively affected by the kindness of strangers.

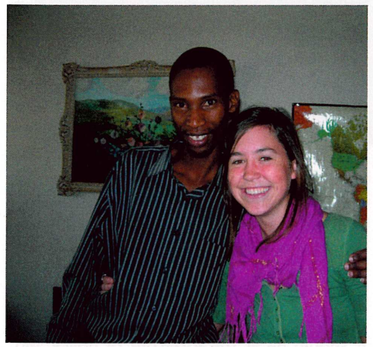


Photo courtesy of Drew Thomas

Drew: Why did you want to come to America?
Justin: It was not a choice to come to America. I wanted to come here because I knew I would find peace and safety.

D: Can you briefly explain why you had to flee the Congo?

J: I fled from war because I was targeted to be killed because I am a banyamurenge tutsi. That is my Congolese tribe. In our tribe we are the minority. In the Congo, we have many tribes, about 452 tribes. Because we are in the minority, they say we are not Congolese like them. The Congolese government and people are not accepting my tribe. They say we are not Congolese and don't have their rights. They took away our property, They kill people and they rape women. One thing I can't forget is that I am a survivor. I am saying this because the younger people my age in my town were killed.

D: What part of the DRC are you from?
J: I was born in Uvira, a city in South Kivu near the eastern border with Rwanda.

D: Can you tell me about your family?
J: I am the first born in my family. Behind me there are another six children. And of course, my parents.

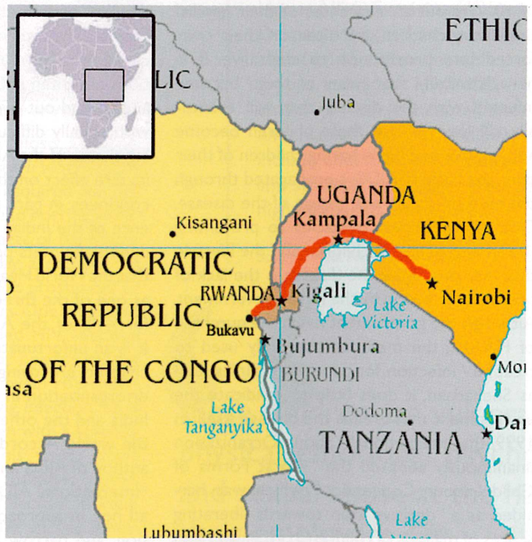
D: When was the last time you saw your family?
J: I remember I left my family at the age of 14. That was in 1994. I left to live with my uncle in Bukavu so I could go to a better school. Where I lived before, there were no good schools. Our parents were poor.

D: Was that the last time you saw them?
J: No. I saw them at various times between different schools. The war started in 2002. Since I have fled, I have not had contact with my parents. I found two of my brothers at Nyagatare, a refugee camp in Rwanda. They did not know where my parents and other brother and sisters were. It was difficult to explain to them how I felt. I was thinking that they were dead, that they were not still alive.

D: How did it feel not to know where your family was?
J: It was painful. It was painful. Even right now I am not glad because we are not in touch.

D: Did you stay at the refugee camp with them?
J: No. The Rwandan army would only allow women, children, and elders to stay. There was a rumor the men would be taken by force and deported. I received some U.N. aid like blankets and sold them. I escaped the camp with $30 and the clothes on my back.

D: So after fleeing the war in the Congo, you now had to flee the refugee camp in Rwanda. Where did you go from there?
J: I took a four-hour bus from the camp to Kigali [Rwandan capital]. It was very difficult because I didn't have or understand Rwandan money. I took another bus from Kigali to Kampala [Ugandan capital]. I was so scared crossing the border of Rwanda and Uganda. It is very difficult to cross the border. I had no documents. You have to get off the bus at the border. I was pretending to exchange money with people. It was a miracle I got through.



Map courtesy of Drew Thomas

D: After narrowly getting across the border, what did you do once you arrived in Kampala?
J: It was difficult. I did not know English or Ugandan. I didn't know where the [refugee] camp in Kampala was. I decided to go to Kenya. It was not safe in Kampala. There are lots of thieves. I wanted to go to Kenya because I know it is a good, developed country with tourism.

D: You previously mentioned that you left the refugee camp in Rwanda with only $30. How were you expecting to get to Kenya?
J: I met a stranger from Kenya, Martin Shimba, and he helped me get a bus ticket to Nairobi. He also shared food at a bus stop with me. I was wondering why this man was so nice. Once the bus was in Kenya, I told him my story because he asked. He let me stay at his house for a week, while he looked for a refugee camp for me.

D: Wow. Martin sounds like a very generous man. Was he able to find a camp for you?
J: He wanted me to stay at his house because he knew life at a camp was difficult. Life in the camp is not life. It's survival, but not life. However, Martin knew he couldn't house a refugee without any documents. He took me to a United Nations center to get a document saying I was a refugee. The officials wanted me to go to the camp. They said if I did not go now, they would not accept me if I came back later.

> "I had no idea where I was going. I was just fleeing to get away in order to save myself."
> - Justin

D: Did you end up going to the camp?
J: No. I stayed with Martin. He was so kind to me. He paid for classes so I could learn English. Martin treated me like a brother. It was a gift from God to be able to live with him. Then, he paid for me to take computer classes where I learned Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, PageMaker, and other programs. I lived with Martin for four years.

Photo courtesy of Drew Thomas

D: Having established a stable life in Nairobi, how did you end up in St. Louis?
J: I knew I could not stay with Martin forever. I found an organization that helped displaced and discriminated peoples. They verify your refugee status and help you. They help mostly Congolese and Sudanese refugees.

D: What is the name of the organization?
J: Mapendo International

D: How were they able to help you?
J: After interviews and paperwork, I got approved to go to America. I was very excited. I was assigned to St. Louis. I had no idea where that was. But, they told me that St. Louis is known for its arch.

D: When did you arrive in St. Louis?
J: I arrived on September 30, 2008. It was my first time on an airplane. I went from Nairobi to Zurich, then to New York City, and finally St. Louis.

D: Who helped you once you arrived?
J: The International Institute found an apartment for me. They provided me with some food and pay the first four month's rent.

D: What else does the International Institute do for refugees?
J: The helped me look for a job and provide shots. They also make sure I have proper documents. They gave me food stamps, a social security card, a Missouri ID, and a health insurance card.

D: Don't they have some English classes as well?
J: Yes, I had classes to help improve my English and also another class to learn about culture and how to live here.

D: I bet it is hard for you to believe how far you have come. What was your most challenging experience during this process?
J: I had no idea where I was going. I was just fleeing to get away in order to save myself.

D: What can you tell people here in America about the situation in the Congo and how they can help?
J: Over there, there are many people who need help and there are many people here that are capable of helping. There are many ways to help. People there are dying and have no idea what is going on outside of there. They are hungry and injured and they need all kinds of support. And as human beings, all people are the same and all people want to live in good conditions. Whatever conditions you are in, do your best to save life. Please ask yourself what you can do for these people.

Since this interview, Justin has discovered his parents are alive and still living in the Congo. He is not in contact with them because there is no electricity or communications where they live.

GET INVOLVED

Readers can learn more about Mapendo International at www.mapendo.org. For readers who want to get involved with the immigrant and refugee communities of St. Louis, please visit the International Institute's website at www.iistl.org. *See page 29 for more information.*

Drew Thomas is a junior majoring is Philiosophy and Theology. He studied abroad through the Semester at Sea Program last fall.

The Silent Lesson:

Homelessness in the St. Louis

by Theresa Edattukaren

Photo courtesy of Chris Weiss
© 2009 ChrisWeissPhoto.com

We made it on time for once! Well… relatively. My family hurried into our church and hastily took our seats on the wooden-side benches as the last verse of the opening hymn neared its end. As I took off my coat, my eyes abruptly swung to the man behind me. There he was again! Usually I was not positioned close enough to really pay attention to him. He was no young man—that was for sure. The only thing that really gave any indication of his age was his torn green coat and plaid shirt that seemed to be even older than his frizzy, grayish-black hair. Besides the priest, this man seemed to be the other most constant participant in this Little Rock Cathedral...at least in my memory I remember my first discovery of his situation. A friend and I were studying for our senior final, basking ourselves outside in the downtown River Market of Little Rock, Arkansas. "Hey, there's a man that I always see in church!" I suddenly exclaimed. "Yeah, he's here all the time, sitting on those benches. He's homeless," she stated bluntly, not looking up from her notes, her eyebrows still scrunched in the shape of a sine curve. I, however, had a more difficult time returning to the task at hand. "Homeless—what do you meant homeless? I see this guy all the time! This man attends church every Sunday!" I found myself thinking. I was not completely naïve about homelessness at this point in my life; I always knew that homelessness existed. I had seen plenty of haunting cases on television and had felt the frustration of seeing begging mothers and children when my family visited India. However, I had no concept of homelessness here in the United States. I assumed that almost anyone could get a job. In my inexperienced mind, those who were homeless were addicted to drugs, or simply just lazy. This is what I believed before my schema of homelessness was totally shattered by this apparent anomaly of a church-going homeless man.

Theresa Edattukaren is a sophomore from Arkansas and is majoring in English and volunteers with Ready Readers.

According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, a homelessness person is one who is in need of a "fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence". USA Today stated that, as of October 2005, 727,000 people in the US were homeless. However, this is only a rough estimate; it only includes those who had clearly noted that they were seeking shelter. Accurate numbers regarding homelessness are hard to obtain because the number of those transitorily homeless fluctuates daily.

In Saint Louis, only those who hold a last permanent address within the city limits are able to qualify for emergency housing. The homelessness in surrounding Saint Louis counties therefore cannot access this benefit. Unfortunately, there are not as many resources for the homeless in the counties surrounding Saint Louis as in the actual city. For example, in 2005, the city of Saint Louis announced a ten-year plan to combat long-term homelessness by opening one thousand more permanent living areas, further increasing the amount of daytime services and shelter during fluctuating weather conditions. The neighboring counties have made no such initiatives. It's easy to make quick mental categorizations for those on the streets and to automatically label them with stereotypes. This approach is often more convenient than confronting the stereotypes. After all, if everyone living on the streets is a drug user, then homelessness must be his or her fault. The rest of us, then, simply don't have to feel bad about the fact that people are weathering the burning sun or shivering in the bitter cold. They are dehumanized by our careless stereotypes. Perhaps this is the mentality behind some of the atrocious acts against the homeless. These are the stories that we too seldom hear about in the news such as the lighting on fire of the homeless man who slept outside a church in East Harlem, NY or the 2005 beating to death of a homeless man by teenagers in Holy Hill, Florida. In December of 2008, a fifty-three year- old homeless man froze to death in Saint Louis. The non-homeless can so easily overlook the plight of the domestic homeless. They, like me, can forget that homeless people attend church, too. Out of carelessness, the simple but important fact that homeless people need safety and warmth is too often neglected. Homeless people are PEOPLE.

> *"In Saint Louis, only those who hold a last permanent address within the city limits are able to quality for emergency housing."*

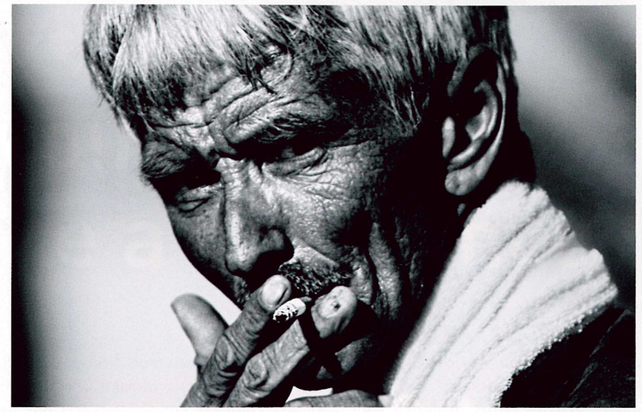


Photo courtesy of Chris Weiss
© 2009 ChrisWeissPhoto.com

Seldom do the privileged remember that there are valid reasons for homelessness. At times, they fail to recall the transitorily homeless. In many cases, people become accidentally injured and unable to perform their job, and become transitorily homeless while they wait for disability. Additionally, many recently became unemployed in the economic downturn, left unable to support their families. These people, too, can be forgotten easily. National Public Radio reports in its interview with Alan Blinder of Princeton that unemployment is on the rise. However, only roughly a third of people without jobs share in unemployment benefits. "Losing your job, in America," Blinder says, "also means losing your health insurance. And joblessness along with mounting medical bills can lead to homelessness" (NPR, 2008). I never learned the name of the homeless man that I saw almost every Sunday during my four years of high school. I don't even know whether he would recognize me now—or if he even knew of my existence then. All I know is that he taught me a strong and valuable lesson by his silent and dignified presence— the lesson of seeing the river of humanity that connects all members of society beneath icy stereotypes.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS:

HOMELESSNESS IN THE NEWS

In Los Angeles, California, attacks on the the homeless have been rising steadily for the past several years. Due to the current economic conditions, homelessness itself has increased almost 400%, contributing to this increase in assaults. These facts are the driving force behind the Los Angeles county's recent suggestion that these crimes be considered "hate crimes", a loaded term that encompasses a specific targeted group of individuals. This proposal is intended to serve as a deterrent for people engaging in these assaults by raising the punishements received by performing such crimes.

Source: LA Times

The Journey to the Other Side...

By Manuela Rodriguez

Imagine waking up in a world of turmoil, where the life you once knew and loved no longer existed. Your friends, your neighbors, your family, and all your loved ones are struggling to stay alive...so what comes next? There's no other option but to leave and hope for the best, hope that you can remain close to most of your family as you set forth on a journey to a foreign land.

If you're lucky, you can escape this harsh reality and settle elsewhere. Settle in a place where civil war does not prevent you from sending your kids to school, or from walking outside and constantly worrying that the next life to be taken could be yours.

As of May 2008, there are approximately 37,000 Refugees registered with the UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees) in the Midwest area of our nation alone. Less than ½ of one percent of the world's refugees are admitted for resettlement to the US annually. Many more are asylum seekers who have yet to achieve Refugee status. Aged from babies barely a month old to grandfathers and grandmothers in their 50s, theirs is a varied background, coming from different countries and different ethnicities.

It is often misunderstood that once refugees are resettled in America they are automatically given money and offered interest free loans from the United States government. In fact, that is far from true. According to the International Institute of Saint Louis, after their arrival, refugees get about $400 per person for housing, security deposit, and food. After that, they must qualify for the same government programs and subsidies available to all Americans (at the same rates and with the same eligibility requirements). Refugees receive no preference for loans. Many prefer to work for themselves and not rely on International aid, but unfortunately they are not always able to find employment on their own.

There are many things we can do to ensure that their transition and journey to this unknown place is better equipped- become an advocate for refugee rights, volunteer at the Center for Survivors of Torture and War Trauma in Saint Louis, tutor refugee children, or simply educate yourself on the issues concerning them. Theirs is a heart-wrenching story of detention, abuse, fear, neglect, and humiliation. They are people who are of our age, or our parents' age. Normal human beings, of flesh and blood, hopes and dreams, like you and me. The lives of many refugees may not always be at risk, but their basic rights and essential needs remain unfulfilled. Sadly, millions in various other countries remain living in refugee camps and are prevented for long periods of time from exercising their most basic human rights.

Photo courtesy of United Nations

Manuela Rodriguez is a senior majoring in International Studies and Psychology. She is President of OneWorld organization and hopes to pursue a career in International relations.

One day you'll wonder,
"Did I make a difference?"

TEACHFOR the
certainty that you did

TEACHFORAMERICA

Full salary and benefits. All academic majors.
www.teachforamerica.org

The Rhetoric of Conflict

by Sarah Markenson

Co-existence of two words with the same meaning, "Salaam" and "Shalom", are the foundation of my resolution to one of the most important modern conflicts today. My passion is to explore, discuss, and publicize the enduring Arab-Israeli conflict. "Salaam" means "peace" in Arabic, while "Shalom" means "peace" in Hebrew. Salaam and Shalom are also used as a greeting in both the Arab and Israeli cultures. Is this similarity of salutations of peace a coincidence, or is it destiny?

Away from the conflict, Israel is an amazing country. My visit to Israel was one of the best experiences of my life. Beyond the remarkable spiritual journey I experienced, there are so many great things that encompass Israel. From the biblical sites to the modern cities, it is a small country with many destination places. It is a country of

שלום

technological innovation, especially in communication systems and national security. My favorite thing about Israel is the culture. Nearly fifteen faiths are recognized as official religions of Israel, while the Bahá'í faith calls Haifa, Israel home. The diversity is immense, which is why the population does not only consist of Israeli Jews, but also Arab-Israelis, Druze, Christians, Bedouins, etc.

Although I support and defend Israel, I do not agree with all of their policies or actions. I do not agree with the expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank. The Israeli government should not allow this and should take active steps to prevent it. I have talked to Israelis and Palestinians, and there is a consensus - no one wants occupation. However, occupation will continue until a trusted peace solution is reached between Israel and Palestinian leaders. Hamas and other Palestinian leaders must recognize Israel's right to exist and vice versa. I hope for a flourishing Palestinian society that can peacefully co-exist with Israel. Co-existence will benefit both cultures economically and politically. Instead of investigating the recent escalation in Gaza and pointing fingers, I address the rhetoric that complicates this brutal conflict.

Many people, including college students, professors, and other activists in the United States, vehemently argue on their state's behalf without considering or listening to the views of opposing sides. Radicals on both sides blindly proclaim their own views, with no intention to compromise or understand other perspectives. The Arab-Israeli conflict is a very emotional and grave subject for many. Although moderates are expected to express their opinions in a calm and courteous manner, even middle-ground thinkers sway from civility.

While holding a viewpoint on the conflict is fine, the negative rhetoric of both Jews and Muslims in the US is harmful. Concerned parties who bicker, yell, and demean others on behalf of Israel or Palestine, only make it more difficult to approach understanding and a resolution to the conflict. For example, Mufid Abdulqader, the former city engineer of Dallas, Texas was wiretapped during an investigation questioning his ties to Hamas. He was caught on tape saying, "Death to Jews is precious." Students for Justice in Palestine at DePaul University commented on the Facebook page of StandWithUs, a Pro-Israel organization: "That's right, continue whimpering and whining over the people who are committing genocide against [the] firing of a few rockets!...Your group is a joke, a mouthpiece of a corrupt, colonialist state. You can burn in hell for what your beloved Israel did to the poor people of Gaza." Similar statements of hate are made towards Muslim followers as well. On a Jewish Task Force blog dated September 11, 2008, a blogger posted "Death to Islam. Death to moderate, mainstream, normal, average, standard, traditional Islam…Death to all those who actively and effectively participate in the three true pillars of Islam: jihad (war), sharia (slavery), and shahada (martyrdom). Death to all those most responsible for 9/11…Kill them all and bomb their institutions out of existence today!" Obviously these examples are extreme, but it highlights the negative influence of the rhetoric and unwillingness to engage in open dialogue. It is easy to point fingers, ignore mistakes, and continue down the same road; Israelis and Palestinians have been doing that for years. With the new Obama administration, this conflict cannot remain on the side burner any longer; it is time for change in the Middle East. In order for any progress to occur, diplomacy between nations and willingness on both sides to compromise need to be present in negotiations. This is more easily said than done. Beyond all the foreign policy and diplomacy, there are simple changes in our individual approach of the conflict that should be improved upon. Small social steps are critical. It is important to engage in open dialogue. There are Pro-Israel and pro-Palestine organizations, but it is important that each side find ways to openly discuss viewpoints with the opposing side. While we do hold our separate perspective, it is vital that individuals deliberate. Why not start a pro-peace coalition or discussion group? A pro-peace coalition may be an effective medium to bring together differing views of both Palestinians and Israelis. In hopes of peace, St. Ignatius Loyola encouraged the Jesuits to engage in conversation rather than

سلام

fight with their Protestant opponents at the Council of Trent. Reminiscent of St. Ignatius Loyola's vision, I am hopeful that humanity can take a step forward and feel comfortable communicating with someone different. The knowledge gained would only add to the prosperity of the world. Be proactive. If you are unfamiliar with the Isreali-Palestinian conflict, begin researching the conflict and talking with your peers about it. Finding a resolution to this conflict pertains to all Americans, regardless of religious or ethnic affiliation. To my intended audience of Arab-Israeli conflict activists: please have an open mind and heart when communicating. Communication not only involves listening and talking but also an understanding that should include social knowledge and tolerance. Jews and Muslims especially need to set a precedent in the US to willingly and effectively communicate. Both Judaism and Islam share many points of commonality. The religious knowledge gained from getting to know someone of a different faith will be beneficial when cross-cultural communication is necessary. For the Arab-Israeli conflict, cross-cultural communication is necessary and urgent in order to reach a resolution. Once the co-existence is recognized, then the two cultures can live together in peace.

Sarah Markenson is a senior majoring in Urban Affairs with a minor in Theology. She is the co-founder of the SLU Jews.

Obstructing Freedom

in the Occupied Territories

by Sharifa Barakat

In my mom's family, the joke was that my aunt brought the Israelis with her when she was born in 1967. The year she was born was also the year that Israel militarily occupied the West Bank and Gaza. Forty-one years later, the situation has only gotten worse. This occupation, illegal according to international law, is still alive, breeding more hardships and heartaches that each generation inherits from the previous. The recent war in Gaza has brought some of those issues

Photo courtesy of Sharifa Barakat

to the forefront of the media for a few weeks, but with or without a ceasefire, the biggest obstacle to peace remains: the physical and military occupation of Palestine by Israel.

There are many contentious issues associated with the occupation, and one of the biggest is the confiscation of Palestinian land for Israeli settlements. Settlements are Israeli colonies built on Palestinian land in the West Bank. There are approximately 121 settlements in the West Bank, which 479,500 Israelis populate, according to the latest statistics from Israeli human rights organization, B'Tselem. The existence of these settlements not only violates international law, but it infringes on the rights of Palestinians living there. According to Amnesty International, "The seizure and appropriation of land for Israeli settlements, bypass roads, and related infrastructure…have had a devastating impact on the fundamental rights of the local Palestinian population, including their rights to an adequate standard of living, housing, health, education, and work, and freedom of movement within the Occupied Territories."

Wherever you turn in the West Bank, you're bound to find a checkpoint. Under the guise of safety, hundreds of checkpoints are strewn throughout the West Bank. Rather than ensuring the security of Israel, restrictions on movement have instead contributed to humiliation and abuse of civilians by soldiers, unemployment and poverty, and a deteriorating economy. People who need to go to school, work, and even hospitals have to endure long lines at checkpoints and hope that they will be allowed through. My own grandparents live 30 minutes away from Jerusalem and cannot even visit it because they are not allowed through the checkpoints; you have to have a permit for whatever place you'd like to go to, and it's very difficult to get one. What the checkpoints effectively do is control and oppress the Palestinian people.

Checkpoints and obstructions already restrict movement, and the wall being built along the West Bank border only takes away more freedom of movement. Since June 2002, Israel has been building a separation wall, mostly within the West Bank, which essentially allows the illegal annexation of more Palestinian land within the internationally recognized 1967 borders. This creates a plethora of new problems for the Palestinians, including being cut off from their fields, work, school, and family. Those who live on the other side of the wall face expulsion if they are not granted special permits to remain living there. This wall violates international law and is another infringement on the rights of Palestinians. The UN has repeatedly demanded that Israel ceases construction of the wall and dismantles what has already been built, but Israel's government has ignored these demands.

Why does all this matter? The US provides billions of dollars of military aid to Israel every year, which essentially funds the occupation and attacks against Palestinians. Events like the war in Gaza, which incurred hundreds of civilians' deaths and billions of dollars of damage to an already crippled country, remind the world that the Palestinians are suffering, but actions speak louder than words. All over the world, grass roots movements of citizens are acting in solidarity with the Palestinians, though many governments remain silent. Recently, Students for Justice in Palestine persuaded Hampshire College to divest from corporations doing business with Israel. This action mirrors the divestment campaign to end apartheid in South Africa, which succeeded; the same can be done for the Palestinians.

My aunt was born with the beginning of this occupation, and her children were born with this same occupation in place. Let's hope and act so that future generations of Palestinians can live with liberty and justice, not prison and oppression.

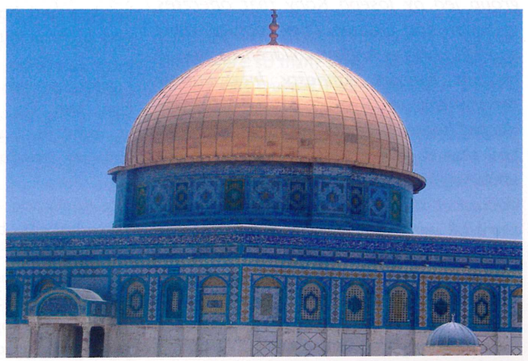
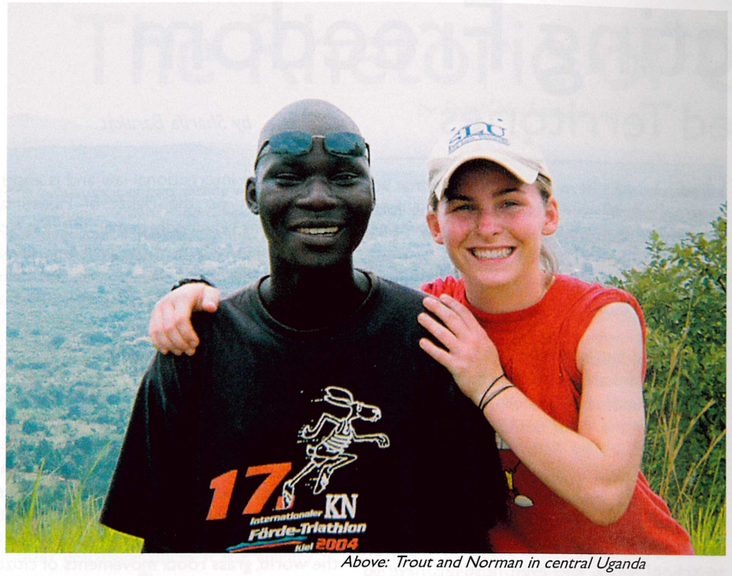


Photo courtesy of Sharifa Barakat

Sharifa Barakat is a senior majoring in English. She is a first generation Palestinian American and is an avid reader obsessed with 19th century literature.



Above: Trout and Norman in central Uganda

NORMAN'S STORY

Conversations with a Former Child Soldier

Conducted by Lauren Trout

Norman is a man I met during a pick-up game of soccer while spending time in central Uganda. Over time, Norman shared his story of his three year abduction with the Lord's Resistance Army. The LRA is a rebel militant group led by Joseph Kony that operates in Sudan and Uganda. They torture, rape, and kill civilians kidnap children to use as militant fighters. Amnesty International reports that in 19 years, the LRA has abducted between 20,000 to 25,000 children and that 8 of every 10 LRA fighters are under eighteen years old. Norman was abducted at the age of 14 and fought with the LRA until, at the age of 17, he escaped. This is his story. Sentences are often confusing but I felt it was important to keep Norman's words as they were written.

Lauren Trout is a senior at SLU studying Political Science and International Studies. She plans on living abroad after graduation to learn about different cultures.

"Although I grew up in a Northern region of Uganda called Arua, in a village similar to the one we're in now, I was not born there. A kind friend took me there after I was helpless and homeless in Gulu. His home was in Arua but he was working in Gulu.

I grew up with the other boys in the village, and we usually all slept together at night in a small round mud hut that had no windows and a papyrus door.

The Abduction

The whole day before the attack and abduction, we had not eaten any meals. It was June, when most peasant farmers wait for harvest, and it was a bad season because there was no rain and most crops wilted. I was really weak with my other younger brothers but slept with a group of other boys of 14 and 17 years. We slept naked, and it's normal for protection purposes and also it helped in the night because we couldn't share the parents' huts. The girls do that too; it's friendship.

At around midnight, the door was suddenly kicked open and tall men begin kicking us to get up. We shared one blanket for 9 boys but the bigger boys would pull the blanket leaving us cold all night. There was no light and so we were saying "ming," meaning "stupid" in Acholli, while we were being hit. We thought our parents were coming to wake us up to go to the field to guard it from the monkeys and birds that ate the seeds and the corn.

Before I slept I had washed my little pants and hung them outside to dry. They were one of my only two pants. We jumped out of the hut naked and I had to put them on since I could not locate the other in the dark room.

We had to run outside without seeing behind us and we realized it was not our parents bullying us. In the moonlight we saw large groups of men in uniform with other half -naked people who were ordered to lie down. I kept running up to the crowd with a man close behind me. I was tired and I could not tell where the other roommates were lying or standing. I didn't know what to do.

We were ordered to move while the soldiers led the way. Soldiers were in front, behind, and sideways to guard against any person from escaping. The energetic men and a few women were ahead in the sequence of height. I would estimate the people were about 200 in number. The rebels were smartly dressed in the army fatigues while few of them wore either the shirt or the pants. Behind, the huts were set ablaze.

We walked a long distance through the bushes and the hills and when it was approaching 8:00 AM, the informer told the group that the rebels had started pursuing us. The commander told us to enter into a jungle that was so big not even a chopper could cross over. We were then told the rebels were on the way and any person who shouted, attempted to escape or lag behind because he or she was tired would be killed then and there. We were then confused as to who the rebels were and it would be this confusion that kept us from escaping. Inside the Jungle we were sorted out as fit and clever persons. Others muscular enough to carry the wounded soldiers when shootings broke out and also the logistics of food looted.

We walked at night for miles and one of the boys didn't have shoes and stopped to pull thorns out of his feet. A soldier turned around and hit him as a lesson to the other boys to keep up and not complain. I think the boy died there because I didn't see him again.

Everything was done as a lesson for the others. Cutting off ears, lips, pulling arms behind backs and slicing chests open, and killing others was done to us as lessons. If someone did something wrong and they had to be killed, they made another child do it to prove their loyalty and willingness to do anything for the LRA. We could not know our location either since there were no nearby centers.

We were quite many and I was trained with weapons but didn't use them often. I worked under commanders or officers cooking, cleaning, helping, etc. We were about 20 different groups of children called "Kadogos," meaning little clever boys, and we changed from one group to another called troops.

The Life in Captivity

At night we stayed sometimes around the fire and sometimes not because it could locate us to the rebels. Our food was only wild fruits. If we got to homes where meals were prepared then it was luck. Our sizes disguised us as little boys who were innocent among the far villages. Our job was to inform the lieutenants of what we were seeing or cars approaching. During some raids we were chosen as close escorts to carry the wounded or dead soldiers so that the government soldiers could not identify them and claim that they had killed several of us. However, many children died and we had to bury some at river banks and caves. Many others had their legs broken or sustained bullets.

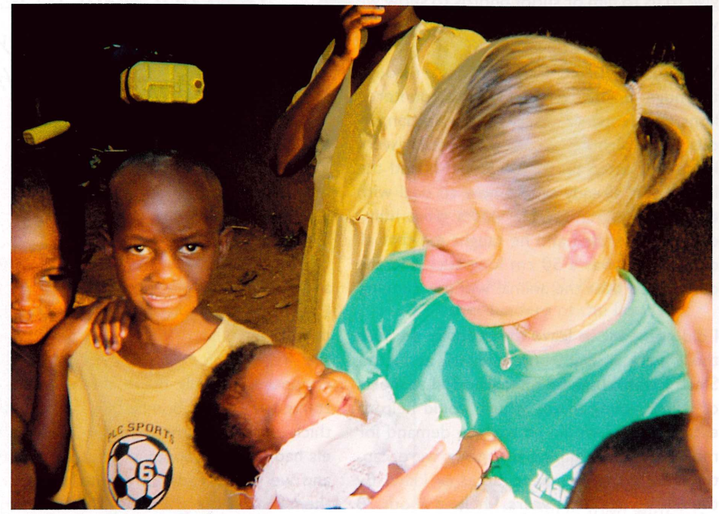
I was placed in a different platoon than my brothers and went to different directions. Once in a while we assembled to meet Major General Oti. He would address us from behind (we were not allowed to see his face) of the plans and off we would go to raid. Sometimes if we went to homes to ask for food from the villagers, they would gives us the food and when the government forces came into the town they would tell them the direction we took, resulting in clashes. Thus, the Lieutenants announced if we came across traitor villages we should cut the lips that report to the government, chop the arms that write letters or the legs with which they ride bicycles to report to the barracks. We were kind many times but the government soldiers would kill or torture the villagers and claim it was done by the rebels. Sometimes our captains had video cameras which they could give to us to film or shoot photos to show we were not the ones who harmed the villagers.

We usually walked long distances through the huge jungles of Sudan. We encountered lions and leopards that were more dangerous than fighting. Some abductees were killed and eaten up by the leopards and the lions. I was already taught how to deal with them by my grandpa. He was a great hunter; before he died and he taught me that all one needed was a 50 cm long stick and the courage to beat the animal without running.

I did not want to leave the captivity because there were so many boys and girls abducted. Since I was trusted, I often had four escorts of fellow young mates who I would help to escape. Then I would go back to demand for more escorts, claiming that they were captured by the government forces or killed. By the end of my three years, I helped about 70 friends escape. I never found my brothers.

I remember only a few places like the hills of Imatong, Rubangatek, Kuol and often, we were kind many times but the government soldiers would kill or torture the villagers and claim it was done by the rebels. Sometimes our

Photo courtesy of Lauren Trout



> *"If someone did something wrong and they had to be killed, they made another child do it to prove their loyalty and willingness to do anything for the LRA."*
> *-Norman*

captains had video cameras which they could give to us to film or shoot photos to show we were not the ones who harmed the villagers.

We usually walked long distances through the huge jungles of Sudan. We encountered lions and leopards that were more dangerous than fighting. Some abductees were killed and eaten up by the leopards and the lions. I was already taught how to deal with them by my grandpa. He was a great hunter before he died and he taught me that all one needed was a 50 cm long stick and the courage to beat the animal without running.

I did not want to leave the captivity because there were so many boys and girls abducted. Since I was trusted, I often had four escorts of fellow young mates who I would help to escape. Then I would go back to demand for more escorts, claiming that they were captured by the government forces or killed. By the end of my three years, I helped about 70 friends escape. I never found my brothers.

I remember only a few places like the hills of Imatong, Rubangatek, Kuol and often, we crossed over the boarder between Uganda and Sudan. I don't remember the place where I escaped, but I was abducted for over 3 years. When I was about 17, some other boys and I ran away when we saw the national military.

> *"I did not want to leave the captivity because there were so many boys and girls abducted... By the end of my three years, I helped about 70 friends escape.*

We were not sure if it was the rebels or not, but we risked everything and ran to them.

The Escape

On the fateful date we had just come from a night assembly with three Majors, four Lieutenants and two captains. We were maintained in groups of ten and set out to go to the frontline for wars when two military choppers suddenly broke the air space and started dropping bombs. They bombed the thick jungles and the hillside but all the rebels had left their spots in different directions and we had already moved for six hours as the moon was bright enough. That was in the morning at 9:00 AM and the senior rebels became suspicious that some children and abductees would escape and betray them. I was with one Lieutenant called Lapaico when suddenly we fell in ambush and an exchange of fire started. He was shot at and I fired several bullets towards the army, wounding three of them. The Lieutenant was shot in the arm. I tried to carry him off to our base on my shoulder but as I was lifting him off the ground another bullet was shot, killing him and passing into my thigh. I fell down, got his belt and tied myself up to prevent bleeding. I picked up two AK guns but there were only five bullets in them; two in the other and three in mine. While I was approaching a nearby base, I met other rebels who mistook me for the government soldier and hauled a grenade at me. I cocked my gun and shot three more soldiers. I missed two and then the gun was empty of bullets. I did not know what to do. I did not have a shirt, it was starting to rain, and the choppers kept bombarding. I fell down and started crying. I saw a group of the government soldiers advancing and I raised my hands up and cried out. As they drew closer, I found that I was wounded by the grenade. I was also still bleeding from the bullet in my thigh. One soldier came close and examined me while the rest kept alert. Three of them saw me weak but still tortured me for being a rebel. I had to tell them I was abducted and have just escaped. One soldier wanted to shoot me straight and his senior officer restrained him and asked if he was not seeing that I was a child.

Photo courtesy of Lauren Trout

I was interrogated. They asked if other rebels were hiding around and I assured them that I had walked a long distance and knew nothing because my goal was to reach home and see if my Dad and two brothers were safe. When I escaped I was led to the Chopper which was half way in the air with a string thrown down for climbing in. I saw many dead soldiers and many more abductees in the chopper who were bleeding more than me. I nearly went mad at their blood.

We were dropped at Gulu Army barracks for interrogation without food until the next day to the hospital. After the hospital, about 30 children were cleared. Others, like me, were supposed to go to army jail but instead were taken to a psychosocial trauma center. Unfortunately, we were meeting other colleagues who shot at us

Photo courtesy of Lauren Trout

and hit us on our way. During the two years there, I met someone and found out that he was the one who shot my mother dead.

After Escape

When I left, my mind got disturbed and I was on the streets, homeless, and nobody could remember me because I had grown and all the neighbors had gone to the internally displaced peoples camp. On the streets, I nearly died of malnutrition and starvation without clothes.

After months of searching, I found my dad. When people disappear, they don't return. So when I returned to my dad, it was most literally a miracle. It was great but life with my family still isn't the same. A kind worker offered to take me to Arua to stay with him but he could not pay for me to go to school. Thus, I only stayed to eat food with the family which we would grow from the garden. I just recently heard from one of my brothers in Sudan that he will be coming in December. Although I am the Vice-President of this Voluntary Youth Organization, I get no financial benefits. I want to campaign for assistance for other remaining abductees like my brother. If I had the chance I would go to the jungles or the villages and take him back home. There are still others missing and those who are already home cannot go to school. I wonder how we shall cope.

A few years later I joined the military to fight the rebels but I had to leave them as well because we were just being used. After fighting again, I joined the Uganda Pioneers Association and was elected as the vice-president. I have a position but I still feel sad and break down when I think about the incident. We need to attend colleges to fit in but we have always been despised. There are still hundreds of children in the bush and the government cannot afford to bring them home, care for them and teach them how to read and write.

I am glad that the government and the rebels are in a cease fire right now but it makes me and my comrades feel useless. Fighting is what we know. Because I am trained to fight, I wish to go and fight in Iraq. I don't agree with the war but I don't know what else to do. Fighting is all I know how to do.

This story is nearly a general thing amongst us in Uganda. I have a lot in my head to put to paper but fear it would land me in trouble with our politicians and the Army because they also contributed to this suffering, an issue which has not yet been addressed.

CURRENT EVENTS:

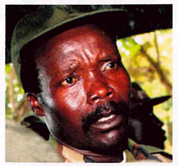


Photo coutesty of Amnesty International

As reported by Amnesty Internationl, On July 8, 2005, arrest warrants for Joseph Kony and other leaders of the Lord's Resistance army were issued. Pictured above is Joseph Kony, leader of the LRA.

The BBC reports that the Democratic Republic of Congo, in cooperation with the Ugandan government, has dedicated troops to pursue the LRA rebels in the northern areas of DR Congo. Joseph Kony and the leaders of the LRA are elusive and have still not been captured.

Kony continues to refuse to sign final peace agreements with the Sudanese government until the International Criminal Court withdraws the arrest warrants for him.

Uganda Pioneers Association

Norman is the vice president of the Uganda Pioneers Association. UPA is a program that mobilizes youth to voluntarily work for community development throughout different parts of Uganda. To learn more about the UGA, go to www.upa.typepad.com.

THE DIVIDING LINE

Overcoming religious extremism in society today

by Amenah Arther, Anu Gorukanti, Nipun Gupta, Caroline Hoyniak, Anu Pulikkan, & Lauren Segelhorst

"May all beings look at me with a friendly eye. May I do likewise, and may we all look on each other with the eyes of a friend." -Yajur Veda: 36.18.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God." - Matthew 5:9.

"And make not Allah's (name) an excuse in your oaths against doing good, or acting rightly, or making peace between persons" -Quran 2.224.

These verses from the holy scriptures of the Hindu, Muslim, and Christian faiths demonstrate peace as a prevailing message in all religions. When looking at the core beliefs of any religion, it is astounding that fighting, violence, and terrorism in the name of religion is so readily practiced, when these actions almost always contradict the essence of religious beliefs.

Eboo Patel, founder of the Interfaith Youth Core, claims that the defining issue of our generation is the "faith line". The faith line separates religious totalitarians from religious pluralists with everyone else waiting hesitantly on the median. Religious totalitarians are those who are willing to use violence to alienate members of other religions, whereas religious pluralists set aside their differences to begin understanding members of different faiths. While religious conflict has been prevalent throughout history, we can initiate the movement for religious pluralism by identifying the injustices tied to religious extremism and actively seeking to understand people of other faiths.

From an early age, people are taught the basic facets of their religion, ingraining these values in their identity. The feeling of community that comes from shared religious values can often create distances between those of different faiths. Those holding similar views become "us" and anyone else becomes "them." It is only natural for people to identify with others who share similar religious and societal perspectives. Problems arise, however, when individuals refuse to respect the beliefs and religious customs of others. As Patel stated, "It is a problem of sociology, not theology; of institutions, not religious sources; of what people do, not what scripture says. The crisis of religious violence in the world today is because of the power of nefarious individuals, not because of the content of religious traditions." These individuals derive their power from manipulating others to believe what they believe; as their extremism becomes more prevalent in a culture, it begins to be more closely associated with the religion itself until in the mind of society the religion is synonymous with the extremism. Until all Muslims are like Osama bin Laden, willing to attach a bomb to themselves and blow up a bus in the name of Allah. Until all Christians become like Paul Hill of God's Army, willing to take up arms and shoot those who have broken their God's law against abortion. And the list goes on, for extremism does not only exist in Islam and Christianity, but in all religions.

The media, though its intended purpose is to serve as a vital source of information about both global and domestic issues, often becomes a device of bias. But, the extent of this bias has rarely been investigated as it relates to religious extremism; this partiality needs to be taken into consideration. The national and international levels of the media thrive upon the application of stereotypes as a means of conveniently packaging a complex message, disregarding the logical and moral discrepancies that result from stereotypes.

All authors of this piece are freshmen and founders of SLU's new interfaith orgainization, InterFaith Alliance. See "get involved" side bar for details.

GET INVOLVED!

Getting involved off campus:

We must take the next step to use our mutual understanding of each other's faiths to focus in on the values which every faith shares. One such value is that of service to others. The Interfaith Youth Core is an upcoming organization at the forefront of the religious pluralism movement whose mission is to build "mutual respect and pluralism among young people from different religious traditions by empowering them to work together to serve others."

Getting involved on campus:

For those interested in participating in interfaith dialogue and service, consider joining InterFaith Alliance, SLU's new interfaith organization. Email sluIFA@gmail.com for more information.

Photo courtsey of United Nations

Photo courtsey of United Nations

For example, the overwhelming misrepresentation of Islam seems to greatly outweigh the ever-present extremist activity in other major religions. Christian-based radicalism remains a prevalent, although minimally publicized, form of religious extremism. Christian fanatic Randall Terry once stated in an article published by The News Sentinel of Fort Wayne, Indiana, "I want you to just let a wave of intolerance wash over you. I want you to let a wave of hatred wash over you. Yes, hate is good." These ideas of intolerance and hatred starkly contradict the teachings of Jesus Christ portrayed in the Christian Bible, just as Osama bin Laden's acts of terrorism oppose the messages of peace in the Muslim Qur'an.

Along with the skewed impression extremists give of the faith they claim to be following, extremism gives rise to yet another prominent injustice: the unfair recruitment of vulnerable youth. Many extremist groups choose the youngest members of a faith community, young people whose minds are easily swayed to the agenda of the group, to become their newest members. Through persistent brainwashing of these impressionable minds, these groups spread their messages of hate and violence to the next generation. Young believers get trapped in the propaganda of the extremist group without knowing that there is another option. They are forcibly placed on one side of the faith line, the side of the extremists who would rather perish in their opposition to one another than live peacefully in coexistence.

Religious extremism is often bred in impoverished societies rampant with political and social injustice. Since the people have little control over their current situation in life, they turn to their faith to provide an outlet for frustration. Unfortunately, this frustration is often manifested in the form of violence. Throughout history, many people have used religion as a justification for violence; in recent times, this practice has taken a dangerous turn. The religious crimes swords and fists once committed are now carried out using bombs and automatics. Clearly, the death toll for acts of religious violence is rising, and society's inaction when it comes to religious extremism is becoming less and less acceptable. But this raises a major dilemma: how can it be stopped?

How can we curb this injustice and bring the latter side of the faith line to prominence? Education. The solution lies in providing society with an impartial and inclusive education about the reality of different faiths. When individuals are given such an education they can begin to think for themselves, rather than simply accepting what an authority tells them. They can find their own truth, and most often this truth will tell them that the global community is not so fragmented, our faiths are not so contradictory.

This problem may seem out of our hands; after all, we are not residents of a developing country where religious violence is rampant. However, religious extremism exists even in our own country, in the form of persecution and contempt for people of different faiths. Perhaps these people aren't all taking to the streets with guns and bombs, but this doesn't make their views any less extreme. We, as college students, have the ability to affect this situation. It may seem small, but through the simple act of engaging in dialogue with those of a different faith background, we are visibly taking the next step to move beyond mere tolerance or coexistence, to genuine understanding. And we have the power, through example, to affect change.

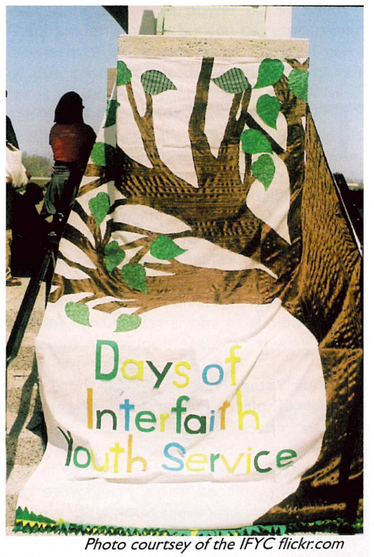


Photo courtsey of the IFYC flickr.com

Be aware of injustices. Engage in service. Seek knowledge, ask questions, and initiate the movement towards religious pluralism. As stated by Eboo Patel, "You have to choose to step off the faith line onto the side of pluralism, and then you have to make your voice heard."

UN photo by A.van Genderen Stort

A HIDDEN EXODUS

The Iraqi Refugee Crisis

by Owen Needham

The war in Iraq is very much the center of America's attention as far as issues of foreign policy are concerned. However, one of the direst and most widespread effects of this conflict has gone widely unnoticed and unaddressed. This is the plight of many Iraqi people who have been forced to leave their homes and seek refuge beyond their borders and throughout Iraq. The Iraqi refugee crisis is one of the greatest humanitarian emergencies in the world and is responsible for the fastest growing refugee population on earth.

In the early stages of the Iraq war there were very few displaced, and most displacements were associated with the Saddam Baath regime. However, as sectarian violence escalated, there was an enormous surge in the number of displaced Iraqis. Many were targeted because of their affiliation, or perceived affiliation, with U.S. forces. Currently, there are about 2.8 million people displaced in Iraq. An additional 2 million more Iraqis have fled to adjacent countries like Syria and Jordan, where living conditions are extremely difficult.

Iraqis who have fled their homes have done so in response to traumatic and life threatening violence from insurgents and other militant groups. In a survey conducted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 80% of those participating reported witnessing a shooting, 68% report being interrogated or threatened with death, 72% report witnessing a car bombing and 77% and 25% report the kidnapping of a family member. The result of this violence is that millions of Iraqis are not only forced to flee their homes but must do so with deep psychological scars. One of the greatest problems facing Iraqi refugees is their lack of legal status in their host countries. This is largely due to the fact that, of the host countries Iraqis have fled to, only Egypt was a party to the 1951 United Nations Refugee convention. Consequently, the remaining countries are not bound by international law to provide for the needs of the refugees and can deport them at any time. This lack of legal status also greatly inhibits the ability of refugees to find employment. Of the countries that Iraqis have fled to, only Lebanon, which holds about 50,000 refugees, allows the refugees to hold jobs. If refugees in any of the other host countries, which include Syria, Jordan, Egypt, and Turkey, attempt to find work they risk exploitation or deportation. As a result, child labor and prostitution are common among Iraqi refugee populations (Five Years Later, a Hidden Crisis: Report of the International Rescue Committee on Iraqi Refugees).

Owen is a freshmen majoring in English. He is from Chicago. and is involved in is the Micah program.

FACTS ABOUT IRAQI REFUGEES

Photo courtesy of the United Nations

- 60,000 Iraqis are being forced to leave their homes every month due to violence
- As of 2007, 4 million Iraqis have been displaced to neighboring countries or other nations
- Iraqis were the largest group of asylum seekers arriving in industrialized countries in 2006
- More than 45,000 refugees are in critical medical condition when they leave the country
- Almost 10,000 refugees are children

Source: UNHCR

UN photo by A.van Genderen Stort

UN photo by A.van Genderen Stort

According to a poll conducted by the UNHCR, 37% of refugee families are dependent on their own dwindling savings for survival. Another 24% are reliant on money from relatives or friends. I think these last two sentences can be omitted. Another problem facing Iraqi refugees is the lack of education opportunities for displaced children. The UNHCR estimates that there are currently 500,000 Iraqi children displaced outside of the country. Of these, only 60,000 are enrolled in school. Many displaced families fear that if they attempt to enroll their children in school they will be discovered and deported by their host government. Many children drop out of school in order to work and support their family.

The UNHCR is attempting to aid refugee families as best they can. They provide food, health care, and aid refugees in appeals for resettlement. However, they are greatly underfunded and are only aiding a fraction of those in need. In 2007, the UNHCR had a budget of only $152 million, amounting to about $30 per refugee. The UNHCR appealed for $261 million dollars for 2008. However, much of that money has been slow to arrive. Many advocacy groups, including the International Rescue Committee (IRC), estimate that an amount closer to $3-4 million is needed to adequately address the needs of the large number of Iraqi refugees. The UNHCR is cannot access the majority of the enormous refugee population; only a fraction of those who have fled the country register with the UNHCR for aid.

The response to this crisis from both the U.S. and the international community is sorely lacking. European countries have only resettled 4,400 Iraqi refugees per year, sending many Iraqi asylum seekers back to Iraq. In 2007 the U.S. set a goal of resettling 7,000 refugees. However only 1,608 were actually resettled, despite the fact that the UNHCR deferred 20,000 refugees to the U.S. The U.S. set a goal of resettling 12,000 refugees for 2008 and actually succeeded in carrying out that goal. However, critics argue that even this amount does not fulfill the U.S. government's obligation to help Iraqi refugees, especially given its role in initiating the conflict that caused their displacement.

It is clear that this emergency cannot be ignored any longer. Even if the United States does not accept the mere fact of these peoples' suffering as sufficient reason for doing everything within its power to aid them, it is still under a heavy burden of responsibility by merit of its actions being the root cause of this crisis. What this responsibility calls for is an increase in funding to the UNHCR and other organizations working to aid Iraqi refugees and a greater effort to resettle displaced Iraqis. It is time for the government to acknowledge the effects of its wars and to then act accordingly and with justice.

UN photo by A.van Genderen Stort

Crops in the City:

urban farming and how it is changing the face of urban nutrition

by Lauren Hashiguchi

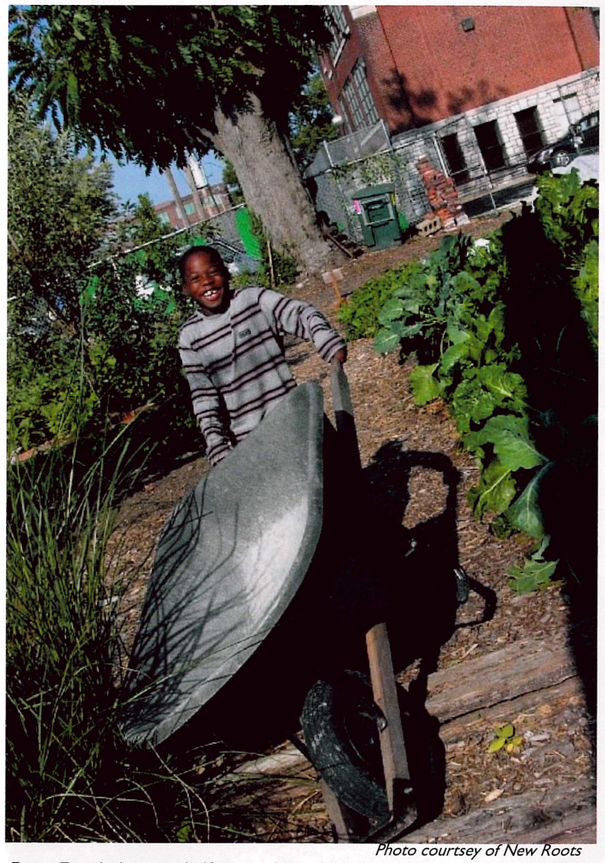


Photo courtesy of New Roots

Nestled on a half-acre plot of land lies a small farm. Insects buzz in the humid air, baskets of vegetables and fruits sit on a table, and chickens peck at the soil. Only a sidewalk separates this lush patch of green from an urban community. This is not a typical farm. This farm, called New Roots, is located in North City, St. Louis. It is part of an urban farming movement in the U.S., which practices Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). CSA is a system in which a community supports and tends to a farm, and in return the farm provides them with a sustainable food source. CSA and these urban farms are improving the health and fellowship of residents in underserved neighborhoods.

Adapting to the constraints of an urban environment, the urban farmers plant gardens on unused land in the cities, in planters, on rooftops, anywhere plants will grow. By providing an accessible, affordable, and sustainable source of food for the local people, the farms allow the communities independence as well as conserve resources that would otherwise be wasted on transport from distant markets. Additionally, they offer the community access to a colorful and much-needed selection of fruits and vegetables.

Why do these farms focus their efforts to low-income, urban areas? The Center for Health Improvement (CIH) reports that there are 30% fewer supermarkets in low-income neighborhoods than in higher-income areas. As a result, families in low-income neighborhoods often do not have consistent access to sustainable, healthy foods. Residents in these areas generally shop at smaller stores, which the CIH reports to carry a significantly lower variety of fruits, vegetables, and healthy meats. Limited budgets and restricted access to high-quality foods make it difficult for residents to meet all their dietary needs. This is especially troublesome for children. Poor diets directly contribute to the ever-increasing prevalence of diseases including cancer, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease in low-income communities. CSA and urban farmers work to combat this concerning problem by providing residents with a fresh, accessible, and diverse array of fruits and vegetables.

Another reason for working with specifically low-income, urban areas is to improve the community's local economy. An important goal of New Roots and other similar urban farms is to "strengthen local economies by keeping food dollars in local communities." Purchasing goods from national chains directs the income of residents out of the community. Without currency circulation within a community, it is difficult to improve its socio-economic status. Started in 2006, New Roots feeds 25-30 families throughout the course of each growing season. These families purchase shares in the crops each year. The shares pay for seeds, supplies, and labor. Thus, the residents invest money in their local economy by participating in urban farming.

Lauren Hashiguchi is the Editor-in-Chief of OneWorld. She is a sophomore majoring in Investigative Medical Sciences.

> *"There are 30% less supermarkets in low-income neighborhoods than in higher-income areas."*

In addition to providing fresh food for families during the growing season, New Roots provides ways for residents to become involved in a truly communal project. When residents come to pick up their share of crops, the farmers often provide them with easy recipes that encourage healthy, seasonal diets. During the growing season, New Roots hosts community potlucks. It even holds community volunteer days!

For children, these urban farms can become interactive outdoor classrooms. As a summer program, New Roots hosts "youth apprentices" several times a week, where the children learn to harvest, plant, and tend to the crops. After harvesting the vegetables, they get to participate in an outdoor cooking lesson and learn about food and nutrition. New Roots reports that these children show increased enthusiasm for nutrition, which is important in countering long-term health problems in the community. In addition to learning nutrition and healthy-meals preparation in a uniquely urban environment, the youth apprenticeship also helps teach the children about science. They learn about sustainable environmental practices, insect identification, and environmental issues. Furthermore, the program quickly expands their education beyond books and into practice. In addition to providing nutrition for the community, these farms foster education and community-building among the youth.

Urban farms are also examples of sustainable farming. New Roots obtains its soil from local businesses that donate organic waste. The farmers compost the materials to produce a growing medium and they raise chickens that provide a natural fertilizer. By reducing use of new materials, reusing old materials, and reducing costs of food transport, New Roots is an example of responsible agriculture.

New Roots is only a few miles from the Saint Louis University campus. During the growing season, the farm is always in need of enthusiastic volunteers! Spend a few hours at the farm and experience the urban movement that is changing the face of poverty and malnutrition in low-income, urban communities around the United States. From Detroit to St. Louis, the urban farming movement is here to stay.

Email NewRoots at info@new-roots.com. They would like volunteers to help with composting, planting, gathering, etc... They also offer tours of the farm!

Photo courtsey of New Roots

Photo courtsey of New Roots

Take a Look!

SLU students and alumni who are changing the world

Kristen Schenk

Photo courtesy of Kristen Schenk

I am currently working with Jesuit Volunteers International in Belize City, Belize. The JVI program is centered around four "pillars": community, simplicity, spirituality, and social justice. My job is as a social worker for Hand in Hand Ministries, focusing specifically on the Building for Change program that constructs homes for families living in poverty. I help to select the families who will receive homes from the program, and I do the follow-up care for the families, helping to put them in touch with other resources they need (related to education, food, healthcare, jobs, etc.). I love the work I'm doing; each day brings new and unique challenges and wonderful joys,
all the while reminding me how similar and interconnected we all are, despite our differences. I'm also getting the opportunity to explore the beauty and culture of Belize and Central America. Overall, I love what I'm doing and where I am right now!

Tom Gill

Photo courtesy of Jessica Trout

Tom Gill graduated from Saint Louis University in 2005. In February and March of 2007 after two years working in El Salvador, Tom journeyed by land from El Salvador to the U.S. along the route that as many as 500 Salvadorans travel each day. He spent this past summer as an advocate for undocumented Latinos in New Orleans. Currently, he is in his second and final year of a Master's Degree in Public Policy at Harvard University studying immigration.

Gregory Stock

Photo courtesy of Gregory Stock

I currently work for the SHARE Foundation: Building a New El Salvador Today in San Francisco, CA. I am the Communications and Development Officer and work with media materials and major donors. SHARE is recognized for its unique model of cross-border solidarity and effectiveness in advocacy, local development, and grassroots initiatives throughout the United States and El Salvador. Currently, we are working on our Seeds of Hope Campaign, which is working on helping Salvadoran regain food sovereignty and avoid using genetically engineered seeds. Contact me at gregory@shareelsalvador.org for more information.

Beth Schwab

Photo courtesy of Beth Schwab

Hi! My name is Beth Schwaab, I am a graduating senior in Investigative Medical Science and Theology. Throughout my life I have been incredibly blessed, and service is a way for me to give back. In my time at SLU I have had the privilege to spent time working and living in the impoverished communities in El Salvador and providing medical assistance in Haiti. But my service is more than that- it is helping my residents in Griesidieck find their way during the chaos of freshman year and providing sign language interpretation at 10pm mass for the Deaf community on campus. I have also been involved in tutoring at Solden International High School and rebuilding north city with Habitat for Humanity. Though I will miss SLU and the Saint Louis community, next year I will be attending Boston University to pursue my degree in International Health.

Salvadoran Scholarship Recipient Update

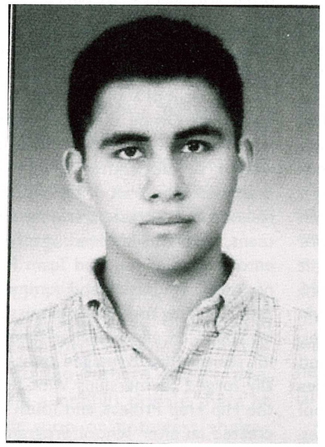


Photo courtsey of Foilan Paz Leiva

Last year, OneWorld created a committee of SLU students dedicated to rasing moeny to prodive a five-year scholarship for a Savadoran at the University of Central America (UCA). The program has been granting scholarships for 15 years to students who demonstrate the potential to succeed in school, but do not have the means to pay tuition. 50 candidates compete for 15 scholarships. With OneWorld's scholarship, one more student was able to enfol in school. The team: Bittney Roberton, Amanda Textor, Sarah Turner, Lauren Verzal, Ryan Clavelle, Jennifer Lay, and Jessica Trout, worked throughout the year towards this goal. By the end of the year, OneWorld was able to announce Foilan Paz Leiva as the first recipient of the scholarhip.

Froilan Alberton Paz Levia lives in El Salvado with his parents and two sisters. His fater works as a mechanical operator, and his mother is a waitress at a popular diner in town. Acoording to teh social economical study conducted by te UCA, his family lives on a month income of $380.00. Froilan is pursuing a carreer in public accounting. He recently sent an email to OneWorld. Special thanks to Manuela Rodriguez, who translated it.

Hi, my name is Froilán Alberto Paz Leiva, but among my friends I am simply known as Froilán. My time at the University in El Salvador has helped me acquire a new outlook on life and get rid of bad habits that I wish to share in the following lines

In my studies, I continue to hold a positive attitude. In my opinion, one of the main fundamental elements of the learning process lies in attentive listening.

Another element is perseverance. On a daily basis students must review class notes and find the main themes from each lecture. Not only must one dedicate oneself to the class but to teamwork and learning to work with fellow peers.

There have been some struggles throughout my studies, which I have taken on with my head held high. Always transforming negative thoughts into positive thinking. I have learned to find the good side of the struggles that come my way.

I am forever grateful to the help that I have received through this scholarship. I recognize that with great effort the students who came from SLU to study in El Salvador took it upon themselves to help someone. I was lucky to be that someone. I see them not only as good Samaritans but also as students living for others. It's often said that it is much better to give than to receive, because you are left with the immense satisfaction of having helped others.

In my case, of course I don't have the means to give money to others, but I offer my time to my fellow peers in helping them with their schoolwork. I have a sense of duty to help others just like I have been helped.

With the scholarship I have been granted, members of OneWorld and the SLU community have made my dream come true. I am on my path to obtaining a bachelors in Business Administration and it is all thanks to your help.

After the Bell

by Swathi Chidambaram

I remember that 2:45 dismissal bell vividly; it was my favorite part of the school day. As soon as the bell rang, I would dash down the hallways and run to the bus, eager to return home. I enjoyed school, but I also loved the time I spent after school was out. I would relax on the couch, watching my favorite shows on cartoon network or talking with my grandma. While several of you also hold fond memories of returning home to a safe, relaxing environment, many children do not experience these same luxuries.

There are numerous children in the United States who have no safe, enriching environment to return to after the school bell rings.

Swathi is a freshmen majoring in Neuroscience and Philosophy. She loves to read and paint.

According to the Afterschool Alliance, 14.3 million children take care of themselves after the school day ends. Only 6.5 million children are in afterschool programs while another 15.3 million children are unable to participate in such programs because of diminished funding and support for such programs. Children who do not have safe options for afterschool activities often become involved in more dangerous alternatives. According to Fight Crime, the hours between 3 P.M. and 6 P.M. are peak hours for juvenile crime and experimentation with drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes. After the school bell rings, many children and teenagers who do not have the opportunities to enjoy a safe environment for afterschool activities become snared by illegal activities.

In order to reduce and ultimately eliminate city crime, it is vital to provide safe, accessible after school activities for the children and young adults. Furthermore, it is crucial that enriching afterschool care becomes available for all children in impoverished, crime-ridden communities. Reports show that participants in afterschool programs demonstrate significant improvements in school work and behavior. Apart from preventing juvenile crime, afterschool programs serve to improve the quality of life for children in difficult life situations.

Photo courtesy of Team Revolution and Youth Venture

One such program exemplifies the benefits of providing high school students with safe, fun after school activities. This program was started by Divine Bradley (pictured below) who went to high school in a low-income area in New York. After losing a close friend, Bradley dropped out of high school and began his journey to create a safe haven for at risk teens, like his fallen friend. At the age of seventeen, Bradley founded Team Revolution, a non-profit leadership and community organization in New York with the mission of creating youth-led, effective after-school programs for teens in disadvantaged areas. He eventually forged partnerships with Ralph Lauren, the Hip Hop Project, and Youth Venture and created an after school program with a recording studio, study hall, and fashion design center. Team Revolution provides an environment that engages students in service, education, and peer-to-peer interaction. Teens in Bradley's program have shown improvements in their GPAs, and many have gone on to college. Since 2000, Bradley has expanded his efforts and created Team Revolution Power Houses around the United States. Team Revolution is an excellent example of a successful youth-led after-school program specifically designed to foster leadership in urban areas.

As able college students and future leaders, we can also lend a hand to improve afterschool care. We can be social entrepreneurs and start programs for youth in St. Louis, or we can spend a few hours a week to volunteer in an existing organization. Current programs in the Saint Louis City area are continuously looking for volunteers to help with afterschool care. By simply giving a few hours of your time each week, you can help forge a better future for our community. After all, every child deserves the opportunity to succeed.

10 (easy) Ways Anyone Can Go Green!

1) HUNG UP: Instead of putting your wet clothes in the dryer, hang your clothes up on a line outdoors. This not only saves electricity, but the sun will bleach your white clothes, making them brighter, and your entire wardrobe will smell good! Even if its raining and cold, you can still hang up your clothes on a drying rack, which you can buy at any big retailer like Target or Wal-Mart.

2) GIVE A LITTLE BIT: Sick of last season's latex leggings? Tired of your old bubble skirt? Instead of giving them the heave-ho into the garbage (where they will end up in a landfill), donate them to a local thrift shop or homeless shelter, which will put them to good use.

3) DO THE LOCO MOTION: Try and take public transportation whenever possible. This cuts down your use of fossil fuels and reduces carbon emissions that pollute the air. Try out your community's bus and subway routes. Don't forget to pack an impressive book to read on the train so everyone will know how intellectual you are.

w

4) WALK THIS WAY: Hoofing it is, no question about it, the greenest way to travel. Try to replace one car trip per week with walking. Not only is this good for the Earth, it's also good for your body and your wallet as well!

5) TUTTI FRUITTI: It requires gas (which means pollution) to get out-of-state food into your pantry. When you have a choice, buy local produce. Your fruits and vegetables will be fresher, and you will also have the satisfaction of knowing you supported farmers in your community. Look online to find farmers markets in your area.

6) TOTAL PACKAGE: Before you buy, examine the packaging of your item. The packaging will go into the trash the second you open your purchase. Is there a similar choice with less material? Try and stay clear of individually wrapped items (like mini candies and bottled water) that have a lot of unnecessary material. This helps keep those landfills empty.

7) ELECTRIC MAYHEM: A classic suggestion: Turn off your lights when you leave the room. If you see a light on in an empty room, flip the switch. It takes half a second and can really make a difference in conserving energy.

8) HOT IN HERRE: *So take off all your clothes* (or most of them). Keep your house a couple degrees hotter in the summer and a couple degrees colder in the winter. Regulate your body heat with your clothing (or lack thereof).

9)BOTH SIDES NOW: Use both sides of your paper. Write really small. Quit wadding up paper to use to shoot baskets into your waste paper can when you are playing Kobe Bryant. Be creative when thinking up ways to use less paper.

10)SPLISH SPLASH: Take shorter showers to save water. Of course, the greenest option is to not bathe at all. Your girlfriend might be annoyed, but Mother Earth will thank you.

Photo by Nicole Barton

Photo courtesy of Cheeranun Naksomsong

Volunteering *in* St. Louis

by Johanna Hemminger

Looking for a place to spend some free time and contribute to the community? These three organizations located in the St. Louis metro area are great places for volunteer opportunities in the social justice arena. Read about these programs and learn more about great ways to get involved in meaningful programs around St. Louis.

Mission: St. Louis

Located a few miles from the St. Louis University campus, **Mission: St. Louis** is a hub for many different programs that provide several services for people in the area. The programs offered by this organization are centered around three core values of education, empowerment, and economic development: each of these values is adhered to by local churches and communities, providing a network of services in a few locations in the city and allowing for easier accessibility to citizens. Consequently, each of the the values comprise a wide range of volunteer opportunities.

Photo courtesy of the United Nations

Volunteers can participate in the Morning Reading program by reading to children before school; or, they could get involved with the Thursday Club, where they tutor and get to know students in local elementary schools after school. In Cross the Street, volunteers get to know people in the neighborhood and develop relationships with them, a great way to exercise conversational skills and meet people with interesting backgrounds. Lastly, development programs like the Community Work Days encourage volunteers to assist with home maintenance for people in area.

For a more detailed list of the programs this organization offers, visit missionstl.org or call 314.863.8448

Johanna is the Senior Editor of OneWorld. She is a junior majoring in International Studies and Anthropology.

International Institute of Saint Louis

If you have had any experience in the education, social work, or development fields, or if you are a fluent speaker of English, the **International Institute of St. Louis** is a great place to apply to become a volunteer. This organization recognizes the issues and challenges that immigrants and refugees face when relocated to St. Louis.

Some of the social services offered by the organization include teaching English, assisting with job searches, and overcoming cultural barriers; these are all aimed at helping people adjust to starting a new life in the United States. Its location in southern St. Louis is just miles away from downtown and is easily accessible to people in the community and St. Louis University.

Photo courtesy of Johanna Hemminger

For more information and volunteering requirements, please visit iistl.org or call 314.773.9090

Campus Kitchen

Interested in volunteering somewhere on St. Louis University's campus? **Campus Kitchen** at SLU is a program with branches at several college campuses across the nation that provides meals to low-income, elderly, and disabled people in the area.

Volunteers can either prepare the food, which is done on SLU's campus, or they can help deliver food to nearby apartment buildings or door-to-door to nearby homes. Students can sign up for shifts that fit their schedule, making it a very feasible volunteer opportunity that serves local people.

Photo courtesy of Johanna Hemminger

For more information, please call 314.977.3881 or visit campuskitchens.org/schools/slu

Reflections of *Faces* in Nicaragua

By Luke Gatta

I used to be a picky eater. After my family left the dinner table, I would sit there agonizing over the cold lentil soup coagulating before me. My mother would snarl that I should eat every lentil because "there are poor children in this world who have nothing." I listened dutifully, unconvinced. I waited for her to leave the room, and then shuffled to the garbage with my untouched bowl.

I thought I knew what poor was. Poor was my grandmother's Great Depression stories. Poor was the occasional homeless man to whom I offered a dollar on my morning commute.

Poor was the kids somewhere far far away that my mother rambled on about. Poor was a statistic. But poor was never a person, a family, or a community. A service trip to Nicaragua changed that, and poor never again will be just a word. Poor now has faces, and these faces visit me regularly.

The first face, Face Number One, is seven years old. It belongs to Bryan. Bryan's lopsided, loose-toothed grin widened on a soft honey-colored face. He pressed his face up against mine, insistently tapping on my head, awakening me to early dawn Nicaragua. This was my first night at the orphanage, a Catholic mission for developmentally disabled orphans, located off a dirt road outside of Managua. I had traveled with ten other high school students, a filmmaker, a priest, and boxes of donations. That night had been a fitful one spent on a small metal cot with wilted sheets separating me from the malaria-infested mosquitoes.

Bryan had no time for my disorientation. The new Americans were here, and there were things to do that could not wait for full sun. Bryan began motioning and flapping about to communicate. He was deaf. This was something I could somewhat relate to, because I myself have a hearing loss. The similarities ended there, however, because I had all the advantages of modern technology. Bryan's only compensation for his loss was that he was a master of charades. Bryan placed a straw hat on my head, grabbed my hand, and gave me a quick tour of his home. He brought me to Elvira, a fragile girl rendered by MS unable to move or speak.

Photo courtesy of Luke Gatta

Photo courtesy of Luke Gatta

Luke Gatta is a freshmen. He is a Philosophy and Nutrition major in the pre-medical program.

Photo courtesy of Luke Gatta

Elvira's face. Hers is Face Number Two. Though she could barely move, a simple touch on her small palm would broaden Elvira's face into the most magnetic of smiles. It transformed her whole visage, and it proved impossible not to smile in return.

Bryan led me to a play area, where the children were already at task with crayons and scrap paper. Once I entered, every child froze, and then scrambled over to me buzzing and laughing. The language barrier seemed not to be a problem: we communicated through stick figures. I first drew a picture of a bug on a flower. Bug in blue, flower in green. I handed the finished drawing to Moises.

Face Number Three. His face does not smile at me. Face Number Three is autistic. Did I imagine it, or did I somehow sense his delight, smile-less though it was? We sat there for an hour drawing pictures—a horse instead of a car, a shack instead of a house.

Most of our time was dedicated to the children, feeding them, holding them, playing with them. This was my service trip, but I quickly saw who was really servicing who. I did not change their lives. They changed mine. Face by blossoming face.

While the orphans changed my perspective on service, it was a trip to a garbage dump that forever changed my perspective on poverty. Halfway there the acrid smell forced us to close what proved to be useless windows. A cloud of flies lingered over the smog of burning garbage. Men, women, and children rummaged the mountains of garbage, salvaging. Scrawny dogs and miserable horses searched for anything edible. As a dump truck growled in, the children immediately became animated, scrambling over the heaps of garbage in bare feet. I pulled out my camera, because words are too limited. Faces, faces, more and more faces. I helped distribute the packages we had assembled, which now felt lifeless in their inadequacy.

It was then that I came across a young girl wearing nothing but an oversized gray tee shirt. She smiled, and I gave her what I had left, which must have been a pathetic grin. I reached into my pocket for a small roll left over from breakfast, and handed it to her. She gently took the bread, nodded gratefully, and broke it. She then grabbed my hand, giving me the larger half. I tried to protest—but she insisted that I have the larger piece. My fat portion of that shared roll was the last straw that broke the back the person who used to be me.

As I knelt down to share with her face to face, I imagined how sheepish I looked in those glittering brown eyes of hers. This is the last face of poverty I remember.

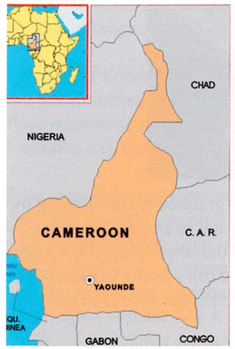
The Final Face is Mine. Struggling to swallow the larger piece of bread around an impassible lump in my throat, my own poverty took shape in the most memorable face of all I saw in Nicaragua.

An education is not confined to the walls of a classroom, or the pages of a textbook. A Jesuit education dares us to consider larger picture of life, challenging us to offer our Godgiven talents to facilitate a small piece of a broken world. Through service to others as men and women for others, we can begin to discover what is meant by in giving we receive. People have asked me how I have changed since Nicaragua. For starters, I tell them, I have broken free of a life-long struggle with lentil soup.

Cameroon *at a Glance*

text and photos by Johanna Hemminger

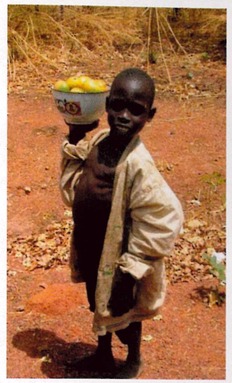
Known as "all of Africa in one country," the West African nation of Cameroon is a unique country that is not mentioned enough in popular media. The history, cultural and ethnic diversity, and the beauty of this country are often masked by reports of political problems that take place there. Although these political problems are important, other aspects about the country should be considered when attempting an understanding of Cameroon.



Map courtesy of the United Nations

History

True for most nations in central and west Africa, Cameroon's modern history is one of European colonization. In the late 15th century, Portuguese settlers reached the coast and began exploring around the Wouri River. Missionaries and other explorers began moving into the area, particularly in the southern and central areas of the country, while Fulani warrior Mobido Adama led soldiers on a Jihad in the north. In 1884 Germany claimed "Kamerun" (derived from the Portuguese word for shrimp, found abundantly on the coast) and kept moving inland. After World War I, Germany lost control of the colony and it became known as the Cameroons: France took over the central parts of the country, while England took the areas neighboring Nigeria. In 1960, French Cameroun gained its independence; in 1961, the British claim was added to form the modern nation of Cameroon. Even now, these colonial influences can be seen: occasional signs in Portuguese mark the southwestern tip of the country; the capital city and areas that span several hundred miles northward show French influence on culture, cuisine, and language; areas in the northwest are primarily Anglophone; the provinces in the Extreme North are dotted by mosques.



Diversity

Besides the official languages of English and French, hundreds of local languages and dialects are spoken by various ethnic groups. These ethnic groups vary as much as the geographic regions of the nation, contributing to Cameroon's nickname mentioned earlier. The central part of the country, where the capital city of Yaounde is located, is on a high plateau hundreds of meters above sea level that, before deforestation, was covered in rainforest. These plateaus slope downwards to the coast, , which are relatively flat. Mount Cameroon, just hours from the Nigerian border, lies on the coast and reaches 10,000 feet starting at sea level. The Northwestern provinces bordering Nigeria are quite hilly and boast a cooler climate than the hot costal regions, donning this region the nickname of "Africa's Switzerland." Travelling northwards leads to hot, dry weather and rocky landscapes, resembling areas in the Middle East and Northern Africa. This cultural, ethnic, and geographic diversity is what separates Cameroon from many other countries in the area and single it out as one of the most interesting places in Africa.

Politics

Cameroon has been a relatively stable country politically and economically throughout most of its history. Corruption remains widespread, though, particularly under the current democratic presidency which has endured for several decades. Occasionally discrepencies between the Francophone and Anglophone parts of the nation happen in the country, as well as between ethnic groups in the area, but none have exploded into warfare. In the past several years rioting has increased due to unfair employment practices; strikes have taken place in the past

year related to unfair compensation of taxi drivers in the capital city and the other urban hub, Douala. Despite these issues, development work is active in the area to address them, and corruption concerns have been more of a focus in both the national and international arena. A visit to this country, then, takes some consideration and planning to avoid these issues; despite these, tourists, professionals, and those interested in these issues will be amazed by the great progress and richness of this beautiful African nation.

5 World Issues You've Probably Never Heard of:

By Mike Reddy

Egypt:

Egypt has the highest prevalence of female genital mutilation in the world, with estimates at a staggering 95% of Egyptian women suffering at the hands of what the World Health Organization deems a torturous act. Young girls often undergo the forced removal of the clitoris and/or the labia by any available means, whether it is a sterilized knife or a simple shard of glass. Countless organizations have denounced this practice and Egypt has recently enacted anti-FGM laws, yet it remains very common.

United States:

The Navajo Indians suffer from both 80% alcoholism and unemployment, astronomically high rates for a people with such a rich and storied culture. Besides alcoholism, most Navajos will cite diabetes as the second most devastating problem on the reservation, the result of countless fast food options and poor dietary habits. With the rapid disintegration of Navajo customs and way of life, the Navajo culture has become jeopardized with the young generations unable to speak Navajo or identify with their own heritage.

Haiti:

Haiti remains the least developed country in the Western Hemisphere with almost 90% of the population living in poverty. In recent years there has been economic decline in the country due to a number of reasons, including very high rates of illiteracy and natural disaster. Less than half of Haiti's population is literate and much of this population is forced into working the agricultural sector, farming mangoes or coffee. Tropical storms and deforestation have caused severe and chronic flooding, preventing Haitian farmers from producing crops, resulting in a devastated economy.

Sri Lanka:

An island country in Eastern Asia, Sri Lanka has suffered from a bitter civil war for more than 20 years at the hands of a separatist organization called the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. Since the beginning of the war, over one million people have been displaced and hundreds of thousands killed or abducted and tortured by the Sri Lankan government. The Liberation Tigers have also been accused of numerous human rights violations, including the massacres of hundreds of civilians across Sri Lanka. Behind Iraq, Sri Lanka has the second highest rates of human disappearance in the world, due to the actions of both the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers, both sides employing tactics such as the forced recruitment of child soldiers.

Jamaica:

Jamaica has been named by a number of international human rights organizations as one of the most homophobic countries in the world. Jamaica reports widespread brutality against homosexuals, including mob attacks and vicious hate-based killings. These actions are promoted by the music of a number of Jamaican reggae artists that encourage deadly violence against homosexuals. Countries in which homosexual acts are currently punishable by death include Iran, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, United Arab Emirates, Yemen and Mauritania. Over the last 20 years, over 4,000 people charged with homosexual acts have been executed in Iran alone.

Photo courtesy of Campus Minstry

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO "LIVE ONEWORLD?"

subdeck goes here and is this long

by Jesse Sullivan

Photo courtesy of United Nations

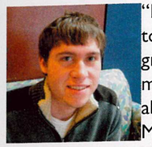
We are already One, but we imagine that we are not. Live OneWorld exists to rediscover the truth that although we are many in our races, cultures, nations, and religions, we are one in our common humanity. What unites us is our belief in the infinite value of the human person. The central idea behind Living OneWorld is that everybody matters, and that every human being has obligations to every other.

We are called to love our neighbor as ourselves, but all too often "our neighbor" is restricted to a narrowly defined group. Being called to Live OneWorld is to continually widen our love beyond an exclusive group until it includes all of humanity. Rather than only caring for ourselves or for those who share with us a country, gender, race, or religion, our prioritized allegiance is to "our neighbors" who are most in need of our help; those who are poor, suffering, oppressed, and voiceless. Standing in solidarity with these people, we hope to create a more just, equal, and free world where everyone has the opportunity to pursue a full life. If we are to create the type of world that was just described, then we must first overcome certain barriers that stand in the way. The following are the four main obstacles to Living OneWorld. Fight the "-isms" *

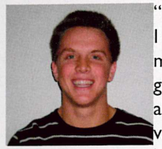
- *Fundamentalism-*
  Religious totalitarianism or the inability to respect the beliefs of those who differ from you.
- *Nationalism-*
  Unhealthy patriotism that denies responsibility towards those who live outside of our national borders.
- *Materialism-*
  Personal greed or tying your sense of value and self worth to your possessions. At the societal level, unfettered capitalism that places profit above person.
- *Apathism-*
  (Identical to apathy, but that word didn't fit the whole "ism" trend we had going!) indifference to the suffering of others based on a lack of awareness of the realities of the world or of one's own capacity to shape those realities.

Jesse Sullivan is a 2009 SLU Graduate. He completed a graduate program at Oxford last year.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE OUR GENERATION WILL NEED TO ADDRESS?

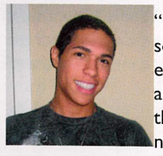


"Mobilizing people to purchase locally grown food. I buy my fruits and vegatables at the Farmer's Market each week. With $10 I can get everything I need for the week. It cuts down bills, puts money into the local economy, and is environmentally sustainable."
-Jason Roche, Senior



"Besides the economy, I think the environment because with global warming and all the science innovations I believe the United States can be a big player in aiding other countries around the world find a solution."
-Ryan Phelan, Freshman

"Our nation should focus more on improving our image around the world. We should learn how to better utilize International organizations and agencies not simply to get our initiatives done, but also to educate the public on how to work for the common good."
-Stephanie Bergeman, Senior



"Healthcare. It's something that everyone should be able to attain and the fact that it's not accessible to so many people is disheartening. I feel like as a nation we should focus on providing better services and healthcare programs for everyone."
-Jermaine Duffis, Senior

*Please note: I am not saying that pursuing material profit, or loving your nation, or following the fundamentals of your faith are bad; on the contrary these things are great and encouraged. These "-isms" become obstacles when carried out as I have characterized them above. Please visit the website for more info.

To Live OneWorld then, means to break these barriers down- in our own hearts and in society. How should we go about fighting these "isms?" The following are principles that The Live OneWorld Organization has adopted in its quest to create a better world.

Engagement: show what you stand for rather than what you stand against.

It is good to call out injustices when and where you see them, but it is even more important to provide alternatives and solutions. We are not so much about denunciations as we are about engagement. Government and big business are not the enemy, in fact they must be part of the solution. It is our job to engage these institutions and leverage their power to benefit those most in need rather than just a privileged few. Our organization follows Gandhi and King's philosophy that outright opposition and protest is merely a last resort, to be tried only when all other means of productive engagement have failed.

Dialogue: Have the humility to realize that you don't corner the market on truth.

When you are passionate about an issue it is easy to frame the issue in black and white, evil them vs. good us. However, life is much more complicated than that, especially when we move beyond criticizing to pursuing viable solutions. The dividing line between good and evil is not drawn between nations, institutions, religions, or even persons, but actually divides each human heart. While Live OneWorld's commitment is to side with those who are most in need, it does not advocate one particular ideology or political means in obtaining that end. It is not Live OneWorld's job to tell the reader exactly what to think about a specific issue (although individual articles will), but it is our job to provide a platform where all voices can be heard. Through this open conversation- which involves a willingness to engage liberal and conservative ideas, viewpoints from all different faith traditions and no faith tradition at all- we will move closer to truth and progress.

Action: Have the courage to act on your potential; the move from beliefs to charity to justice.

Here at Live OneWorld we believe that our love and concern for others must move beyond our beliefs, our mere sentiments, and even beyond our charity. Beliefs alone mean nothing without the courage to live them out in our daily lives. You have great power and it starts by realizing that. Americans live in the most prosperous and powerful society the world has ever known. With half of the world merely struggling to get by, we are the exception! Take this gift of power endowed to you and use your unique skills and talents to shape the world around you. Its time we realize that charity is a quick fix. Don't give a man a fish teach him to fish. Long term structural solutions will only come when we work to solve the underlying root causes of the problems. This is the work of justice. The U.S. sits atop the global political and economic structures of the world, and as citizens we have a unique privilege and responsibility to shape these institutions to bring about global justice. Beliefs are good, action is better. Charity is good, justice is better.

Photo courtesy of United Nations

Photo courtesy of United Nations

> *"Beliefs are good, action is better. Charity is good, justice is better."*

Reflections of Chile

by Caitlin Lazier

Photo courtesy of Caitlin Lazier

Upon my arrival in Santiago, Chile, just over seven months ago, I had at best a fuzzy definition of social justice in my mind. I see now that the true meaning of solidarity completely escaped me. One of the great characteristics of the Chilean people is their ability to empathize with others and their desire to give all that they can to charity. In the United States, we are not confronted everyday with poverty. But in a developing country, it is impossible to avoid the harsh reality of those who live below the poverty line. The Chilean spirit of charity is embodied in a great volunteer organization, Hogar de Cristo, a home for at-risk children where I have recently had the pleasure to help.

Hogar de Cristo was founded by a Chilean Jesuit priest, St. Alberto Hurtado. As the story goes, St. Hurtado was walking the streets of Santiago on a cold winter night when he came upon a homeless man. As he peered into the face of the homeless man, he saw the face of Jesus looking back at him. From that night on, St. Hurtado worked to create social justice and with his famous quote, "Help until it hurts," formed Hogar de Cristo.

Today Hogar de Cristo is the best-known volunteer organization in Chile. The goal of Hogar de Cristo is to provide appropriate and loving shelter to the poorest of the poor. The organization offers support for Chile's needy of all ages, from babies to older adults, including individuals and families under social risk conditions as well as physically and mentally disabled persons. In addition to providing shelter, Hogar de Cristo seeks to generate awareness of the reality of poverty, in order to inspire people into action, promote initiatives for solution, and denounce problems that can be solved.

I have learned that, to help overcome poverty and create social justice, work must start on a small scale. Furthermore, the best way to really know a culture is to volunteer. Through my volunteer work in Chile, I have learned a great deal, had lots of fun, and acquired invaluable life experience, and gained a sincere desire to help the problems of poor Chilean society in the true spirit of Hogar de Cristo.

> *"Help until it hurts."*
> *-Hogar de Cristo*

Photo courtesy of Caitlin Lazier

Caitlin Lazier, currently studying in Chile, is a junior at SLU and is majoring in International Studies and Spanish.

Introducing....OneWorld BLOG

sluliveoneworld.org

In our blog, our writers disuss everything from cool human beings to inspring social movements.
This blog is for you. Learn about YOUR WORLD!
Below is an excerpt from the blog.

Dr. Michael Kimmel:

Cool Sociological Human

by Laura Bowman

Bowman with Kimmel at St. Louis Community College - Meramec, courtesy of Laura Bowman

I first heard about Dr. Michael Kimmel around the beginning of the fall semester last year. I had just moved back to my hometown to go to Illinois State University after going to SLU for a year and as long as we are being honest, I was in a rather odd place. I was very glad to be back with my old friends, but at the same time there were (and still are) people that I wasn't sure how I was going to navigate the rest of my collegiate years without seeing on a regular basis.

So in my state of dissatisfaction with college in general, I discovered Dr. Kimmel. I caught him on the *Today Show* doing publicity for his newest book, Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men, an exploration of the "guy" culture of American males ages 16 to 26. Dr. Kimmel, a sociologist at the University of New York Stony Brook, is one of the leading experts on men and masculinity today. He somehow managed to take everything I ever felt about the college dudes and bros surrounding me and explain it all in a delightfully intelligent manner (without the exasperated sighs and angry grunts that usually frequent my conversations on the subject).

Dr. Kimmel outlines three factors that allows guy culture to thrive; the cultures of entitlement, silence, and protection. His basic theory is that not too long ago, in a not too far away land, white males were entitled to pretty much anything. They got the houses they wanted, the good jobs, and all the goodies that come along with it (that means you, ladies!). But in today's world, these white men now have to compete with both women and minorities for the very same things they believed were theirs without having to try too hard. As it turns out, these men are not too happy about that and unfortunately, our society is structured in such a way that rewards and expects negative behaviors. Gay baiting, bullying, and sexism are seen as nonissues due to "boys will be boys" attitudes and the unrealistic and ridiculous "Guy Code" ("boy's don't cry," "bros before hos," "it's better to be mad than sad," "size matters," etc.) that is to be adhered to at all costs. Men stay in Guyland because it is safe. Since "masculinity is largely a 'homosocial' experience: preformed for, and judge by, other men," living in Guyland helps to ensure that you will not become a victim of it.

As I am writing this I feel like I am not giving his work the justice it deserves. It is brilliantly complex in that it is able to show us how "guy" culture fosters rampant homophobia, normalizes predatory sex and party rape, and does not foster the skills necessary to become a responsible adult. A "boys will be boys" attitude helps no one, "if we shrug our collective shoulders…we do them [the boys] a great disservice. We abandon boys to be half-man. They will never grow up to be the kind of men they are capable of becoming."

Somehow, Dr. Kimmel manages to both depress me about the state of masculinity in this country and give me hope. He doesn't believe that Guyland has to conquer the world. Everyone has the ability to help fight it—by basically calling it what it is, B.S. (which I know is way easier said than done). While I think I get the guys, dudes, and bros much better now, there are still many questions that are yet to be answered. Like why do they insist on spitting all of time, the quad is a veritable minefield of loogies when it hasn't rained for a few days? I guess there are some things I may never know (at least until Kimmel publishes another book.)

Laura is a sophomore at Illinois State University studying apparel merchandising and French.

Only With Eyes to See:
Finding True Solidarity in Guatemala

by Sam Wilson, SJ

I learned something about solidarity last July in Columba, Guatemala, grieving with a father who had lost his son in a hit-and-run accident. I knelt and prayed with him on the front porch of the language school where he'd been my teacher, searching for words of consolation in broken Spanish. Through tears, he told me that the police had found the man who killed his son, but they would not pursue the case, due to a lack of evidence. Translation: the police had been paid off. As he clung to me and sobbed, asking me why, I cried with him, and the dark hills around us shone with lights of the poor village of Nuevo San Jose. We could do nothing else but share a grief that had no language.

All summer, I lived with people who had no access to medicine, money or education. I watched as people struggled to feed their families and raise their children. I heard Mayans tell stories of entire villages destroyed during Guatemala's thirty-six year civil war, a time when relatives, parents and children routinely disappeared. And now, it seemed even simple justice for a father's dead son couldn't be had. I was full of righteous anger, ready to come back to the U.S. and work for change. But I had one more lesson to learn.

The night after Rodrigo died, the town of San Marcos held an all night vigil. The entire community surrounded the house, holding candles and singing hymns. In a cold rain, women passed hot bread, coffee and soup to the crowd huddled under a large tent. Rodrigo's open coffin lay in the living room of the house, surrounded by portraits: He had been a typical Guatemalan kid with slick black hair, deep black eyes and a wry smile. White candles burned around the coffin, and when I looked down at the boy's silent face wreathed in candlelight, I wondered how God could let someone die at sixteen.

Through the night and into morning, neighbors and relatives moved in and out of the house, talking, consoling, eating, and crying. I had only seen this once before on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota, where the Sioux held a feast before a funeral and stayed with the body of a relative for days, never leaving it alone before burial. Likewise, the people in this mountainous region of Guatemala grieved the dead for days, believing that the dead went to heaven on the tears of the living.

In the morning, pallbearers carried Rodrigo's coffin through the streets of San Marcos. At each street, people joined the funeral procession, walking silently behind. Each time we passed one of Rodrigo's favorite places—a store, a café—the procession stopped for a moment of silence.

Rain fell as the crowd followed the coffin into Rodrigo's high school. Students stood in green and white uniforms in the hall and silently watched as we passed, some bowing their heads, some crying. We walked the coffin into the gym, and there Rodrigo's principal and teachers offered remembrances of him as a student.

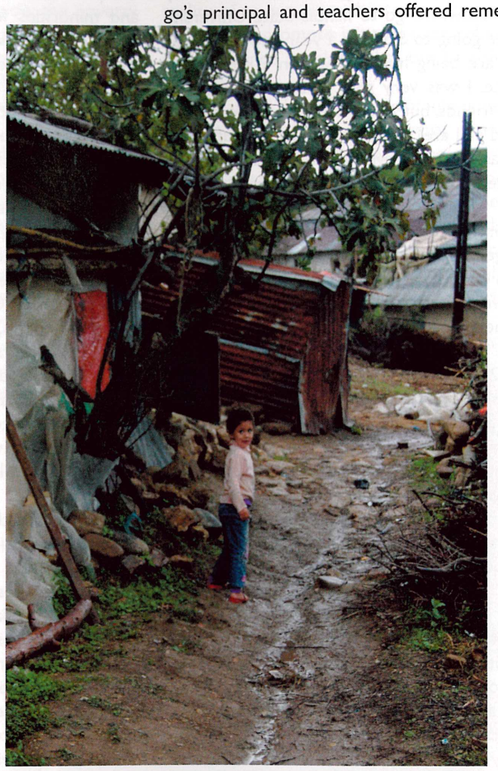


Photo courtesy of Tyler Porth

Sam Wilson is a Jesuit Scholastic in his second year of study at SLU. He spent two months in Guatemala studying Spanish.

When we arrived at the cemetery, Rodrigo's father helped slide the coffin into the family crypt and sealed it with wet cement, brushing the cement over the opening one stroke at a time. The crowd watched in silence.

Dorothy Day once wrote that "we all know the long loneliness" and the "only solution is a love that comes from community." Standing in the cemetery, watching Rodrigo's burial, I saw that love as if for the first time. Until that moment, I had been blinded from that love by a misguided superiority, a belief that I—a rich American –was from a tribe of Rich Men who daily stepped over the Poor Lazaruses of the developing world via consumerism and unfair trade practices.

These realities are true. Yet a deeper truth persists: I, too, am poor: poor as a child of divorce, a scattered family, an impersonal culture of consumerism. The poor of Guatemala taught me that solidarity meant letting them—the poor –remove the scales of superiority from my eyes.

All photos courtesy of the La Escuela de la Montaña, Fátima, and Nuevo San Jose communities of Guatemala.

La Clinica:

"A Multi-culturally Proficient Health Care Center for the Underserved, Immigrants and Refugees"

by Lauren Hashiguchi

Photo courtesy of La Clinica

Photo courtesy of La Clinica

Imagine you spoke no English. You are an immigrant from South America, a refugee from Somalia, a displaced person from Bolivia. You have come to the United States to escape oppression and war and to seek opportunity. Your health insurance is meager, or for many, non-existent. Does your health matter less? Where can you get the quality care that you desperately need? La Clinica, a health center only three miles from Saint Louis University, works tirelessly to provide this care. Regardless of ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, age, or gender, everyone deserves compassionate, quality health care. For these immigrants and refugees, La Clinica provides culturally sensitive health care that is accessible, affordable. In addition to exams, the clinic also provides WIC supplemental nutrients for women who are pregnant and nursing, and for their children. Without La Clinica, many of these people would not have the resources to receive the health care that many take for granted.

La Clinica's staff is primarily bilingual. They are in need of SLU volunteers who are fluent in Spanish to help assist with translation during appointments and with the check-in of patients. If you speak Spanish, you can be a part of providing quality health care for those who need and deserve it.

While most of La Clinica's patients are Spanish speaking, about 10% of their patients are refugees from around the world. They are from Somalia, Myanmar, the Kurdish communities of Iraq, etc… Thus, all volunteers for La Clinica do not need to speak Spanish fluently. Non-bilingual volunteers are needed to help with case management, reception and managing patient charts.

Some people travel abroad to get the multi-cultural experience of service that is at La Clinica. This opportunity to serve others is in SLU's backyard! So, go to their website www.laclinica-stl.org, fill out the volunteer form, and become a part of La Clinica's mission to provide health care for the immigrants and refugees of St. Louis!

Photo courtesy of Tala Esguerra

Photo courtesy of Tala Esguerra

WORLD PEACE IS SPELLED C-I-S-V

by Tala Esguerra

World Peace is such a strange concept. Everyone from beauty queens to world leaders talks about it. People from all corners of the globe and of different faiths pray for it all the time. It's something many hope and dream for, and yet, it is so hard to grasp the idea of a truly united world. At least it was this way for me, until I joined CISV or Children's International Summer Villages, 6 years ago.

CISV is a global community that was founded by Doris Allen, an American, in 1951. Since then, 190,000 people have participated in more than 5000 international activities. With a presence in over 60 countries, it is founded on the belief that "peace is possible through friendship - and that the real difference can be made by starting with children." This tenet of global friendship may seem far-fetched and idealistic to wary outsiders, but CISV does make it possible, and I am fortunate enough to have experienced it myself.

CISV has various programs for people of different ages worldwide. I've joined several of these, the most memorable of them being when I junior staffed for a summer camp for 15 year olds in the Philippines. This camp lasted for 3 weeks, and brought together kids and adults from Brazil, France, Germany, Indonesia, Jordan, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, and Spain. As with each CISV camp, the camps aim for the participants to share their cultures and learn through experience. Each day, a different country has the opportunity to share their culture whether by cooking up their national dish, presenting a cultural ritual, or just showing pictures of home—something so foreign to everyone else. One day we could be learning how to dance the Filipino tinikling, and the next we could be belly dancing with Jordanian scarves. One day we would be eating Brazilian chocolate brigadeiros and the next we would be feasting on French crepes. In addition to this cultural exchange, there were also various opportunities for peace education, and service learning. Discussions on current events were held, and we also had an opportunity to teach at a public school in a depressed area in the Philippines, and towards the end of the camp, the participants decided to hold an auction to raise money to buy books for the school. Most importantly for me, we also had a chance to live together, and be one community, coexisting with our cultural differences. Living and working for 3 weeks together is such an eye-opening experience in that it allows you to truly get to know people in a deeper sense, and makes you see that there are things that are the same the world over.

Today, almost two years after that camp, I'm still in touch with many of the friends I made there. I've visited my friends in France, and Spain, and it was wonderful to be able to see where they were from, and to tour Paris and Madrid from a local's point of view. I also email many of them regularly, and it's nice to know that I have an open invitation somewhere in every continent in the world.

It's also comforting to know that coexistence is possible. Languages and continents and differences aside, we are all the same. It may seem far-fetched, idealistic, and intangible, those beauty queens have it right when they answer "world peace." And though everyday life in the rest of the world may not be as optimistic as those yellow-submarine tinged weeks in a CISV camp, it is experiences like that that keep us hoping, and hopefully, make us more inspired individuals who actively seek peace out wherever they are.

Tala Esguerra is a junior majoring in Communication and International Studies and minoring in Political Science. She just moved to St. Louis after spending a year and a half in SLU Madrid. She grew up in the Philippines, and enjoys traveling, learning about other cultures, and cooking.

TRAVELS IN CHINA:
A Reflection

by Tricia Wong

Photo courtesy of Tricia Wong

Sometimes when I revisit my memories of my semester spent in China, a lot of emotion floods through my heart. Mainly, a feeling of deep affection comes out for the people I met, the experiences I went through with other students, and the issues at hand that I learned. I also feel sad sometimes, knowing that even here people know so little about China. I believe a lot of times, the response is they picture a foreign country that is so far from America they do not even take the time to consider any further what's in China or what's going on in that country for that matters. This word "China" in of itself is not distasteful to hear, nor beckoning to come to recognize. The word evokes indifference and that is all. What they know about the country is what they see in movies, television or from what they read about in the newspapers. For example, the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics presented the most exquisite Chinese culture grand banquet to the whole world. It was nothing less than extraordinary. It was unprecedented. It was marvelous, world-shaking, vast, and overall splendid. The work of introducing China to the world was unparalleled, with China spending a whopping $40 billion in projects related to the games; let alone spending just $100 million on the opening show. Yet, I'm sure no one saw the grubby peasants with wiry frames and skin several shades darker than city folk that helped build the stadium making less than a few dollars a day. They are definitely not part of the image of the capital that China's communist authorities want to project.

The thing is, we don't really care to waste our time or energy to learn about something that has no connection to us or even bother to dig deeper, and that totally makes sense. I say this because I was this person. Even as a Chinese born American, with some sort of cultural tie to my homeland, my reaction is just the same: indifference. "China? Oh, that far away place. Well it really has nothing to do with me." But after my tiny glimpse of the country from spending a semester there, I feel an obligation to share even a little of what I saw or learned and hope that others would feel my affection for the country as well and maybe dig a little deeper in discovering more about China.

At the beginning of our trip, we were given the opportunity to participate in a month long trip along the Silk Road. On this trip, we were able to see China's richness in certain cities but also see poverty in its most severe form in China's geographic and social margins: those included mountainous areas or deserts that ring the country, or areas inhabited by ethnic minorities, who for cultural and historic reasons have benefited far less than others from the country's long economic rise. I remember visiting many villages where I was shocked to see the conditions in which people lived: in some, people lived in tents, while in others, people slept in crowded shacks.

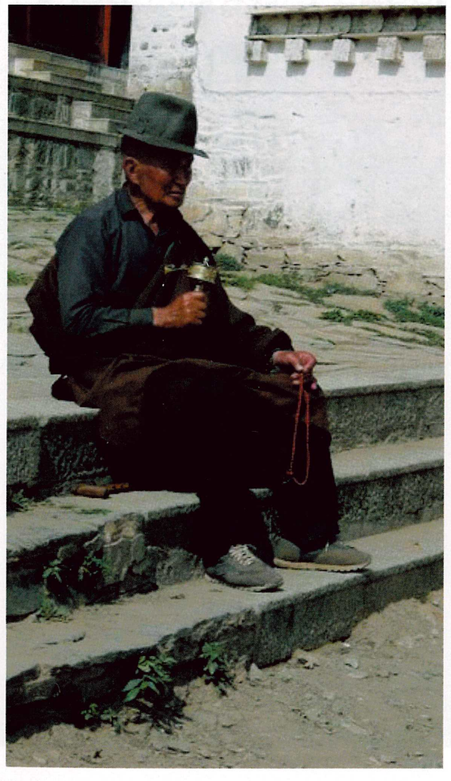
In these villages, we also had the chance to visit a local school. In one school, many of the classrooms had dirt floors, wooden and cracked desks, and broken windows. It was extremely cold, and I couldn't imagine learning in such an environment. Yet, I could hear the children laughing and see the smiles at the delight of having so many foreign visitors to play with. One little girl, held my hand and led me to her own desk in the classroom. She proceeded to open her desk and proudly show me her stained, rather old looking English book. As I flipped through the book that was already falling apart, I was touched by how humble the circumstances were that this little girl was going through. Still, having received an education was a privilege to her. Sadly, that is the reality in many cases.

Even in Beijing, a city known to be the focal point of economic rise, the city is very similar to the rural villages we saw. At the university I studied at, the students lived in humble circumstances. The dormitory on campus, housed 10,000 students, with six people living in one small room that had lofted beds. The bathrooms and showers were located far away from the dorms and they had to walk outside sometimes in the middle of winter to get to them. In our international dormitory, we lived two to a room in a spacious area. We had our own showers and western toilets. We had "fuwuyuans" or custodians that came once a week to clean our bathrooms and hallways. When I showed a Chinese student my room one time, she marveled at our room and stated, "You are so lucky." Even with our fortunate circumstance, we still complained by saying that our room was too small, our beds were too hard, or our bathrooms were too gross. We complained and complained, while the Chinese students were even thankful for having an education, not really caring about the circumstance in which they lived in. Even on weekends, the Chinese students would be crowding the libraries and studying their nights away, for they were the hope of their families by receiving a college education. They didn't throw away this opportunity, but instead cherished the money their families spent on having them there, while we went out on the town ruthlessly spending our money on cheap beer and going out to clubs.

There is so much to say about what is going on in China that is beyond face value. There is more beyond the news of China's popular environmental and propaganda haze, the scrutiny of Tibetan issues, or the presence of communism in the country. I hope people will further research China and to learn more about the country. Sometimes social justice doesn't have to be something so intangible or requiring too much of our work or time. Sometimes all it takes is just a change in perspective and a change in attitude.

Photos courtesy of Tricia Wong

> *"...the grubby peasants with wiry frames and skin several shades darker than the city folk that helped build the stadium, making less than a few dollars a day. They are not part of the image of the capital that China's communist authorities want to project."*



Tricia Wong is a senior at SLU majoring in physical therapy. She is involved in SLU's Ultimate Frisbee Team, Club Softball, and Intervarstity Christian Fellowship.

Photo by Mary Thomas

Photo by Beth Schwab

SLU Students in Service:

Photo by Beth Schwab

Photo provided by Campus Ministry

Photo by Drew Thomas

Photo by Drew Thomas

Photo by Johanna Hemminger

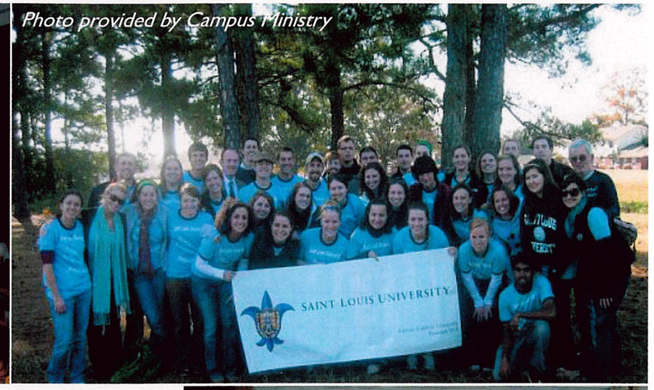


Photo provided by Campus Ministry

Pictures from Experiences Around the World

Photo by Kristen Schenk

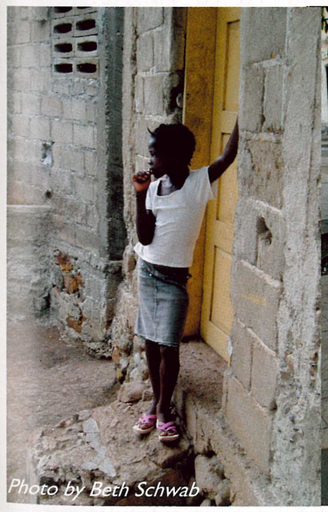


Photo by Beth Schwab

Photo provided by Jessica Trout

Photo provided by Campus Ministry

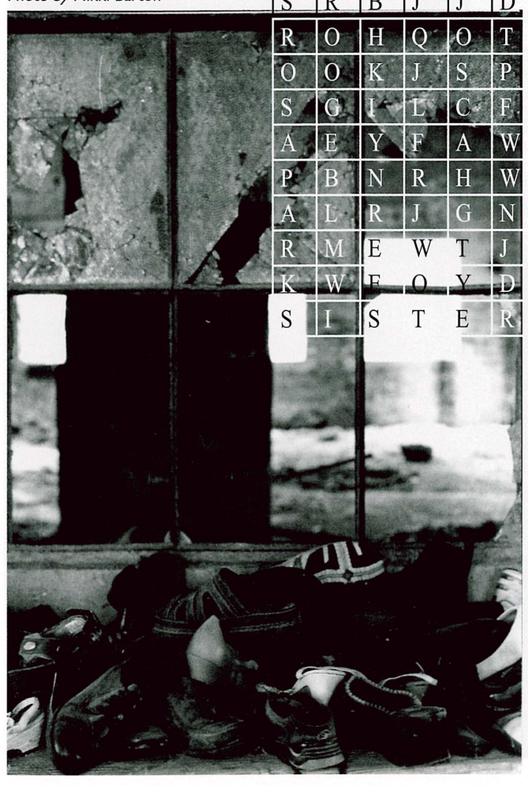
Peacekeeper Word Find

by Katherine Kinghorn

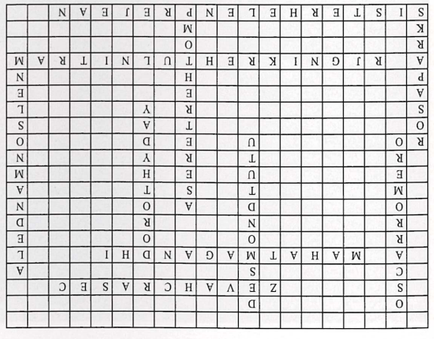
1. Mahatma Gandhi
2. Dorothy Day
3. Martin Luther King, Jr.
4. Mother Teresa
5. Cesar Chavez
6. Desmond Tutu
7. Sister Helen Prejean
8. Nelson Mandela
9. Oscar Romero
10. Rosa Parks

D	V	O	B	L	Y	F	B	C	F	J	K	L	J	B	O	P	D	F	F
F	O	G	D	H	A	V	D	D	O	N	E	F	P	E	T	U	E	E	S
D	S	Q	O	L	H	H	Z	E	V	A	H	C	R	A	S	E	C	D	A
N	C	N	E	D	N	A	D	S	L	D	N	A	R	R	I	S	L	X	A
I	A	D	M	A	H	A	T	M	A	G	A	N	D	H	I	N	Q	K	L
F	R	H	A	D	D	P	J	O	D	Q	P	Q	O	S	D	D	F	E	E
S	R	L	N	G	I	P	O	N	N	U	V	V	R	I	J	O	H	A	D
Q	O	N	V	J	Q	Y	S	D	Y	O	A	E	O	A	R	L	E	D	N
B	M	F	Y	E	B	D	N	T	B	D	S	R	T	S	E	E	T	H	A
M	E	W	D	E	O	O	C	U	O	Y	E	Z	H	T	A	H	I	H	M
S	R	B	J	J	D	M	E	T	D	W	R	O	Y	E	C	S	M	S	N
R	O	H	Q	O	T	O	H	U	O	D	E	R	D	R	E	K	E	T	O
O	O	K	J	S	P	T	U	S	F	D	T	O	A	A	S	H	E	I	S
S	G	I	L	C	F	H	D	F	R	M	R	V	Y	N	O	F	T	E	L
A	E	Y	F	A	W	S	X	W	E	V	E	N	B	D	R	M	R	E	E
P	B	N	R	H	W	C	C	D	D	G	H	D	A	E	A	S	Q	U	N
A	L	R	J	G	N	I	K	R	E	H	T	U	L	N	I	T	R	A	M
R	M	E	W	T	J	O	W	E	Y	O	O	O	T	H	O	E	Q	R	S
K	W	E	O	Y	D	R	R	A	U	D	M	V	H	V	R	D	E	N	F
S	I	S	T	E	R	H	E	L	E	N	P	R	E	J	E	A	N	O	W

Photo by Nikki Barton



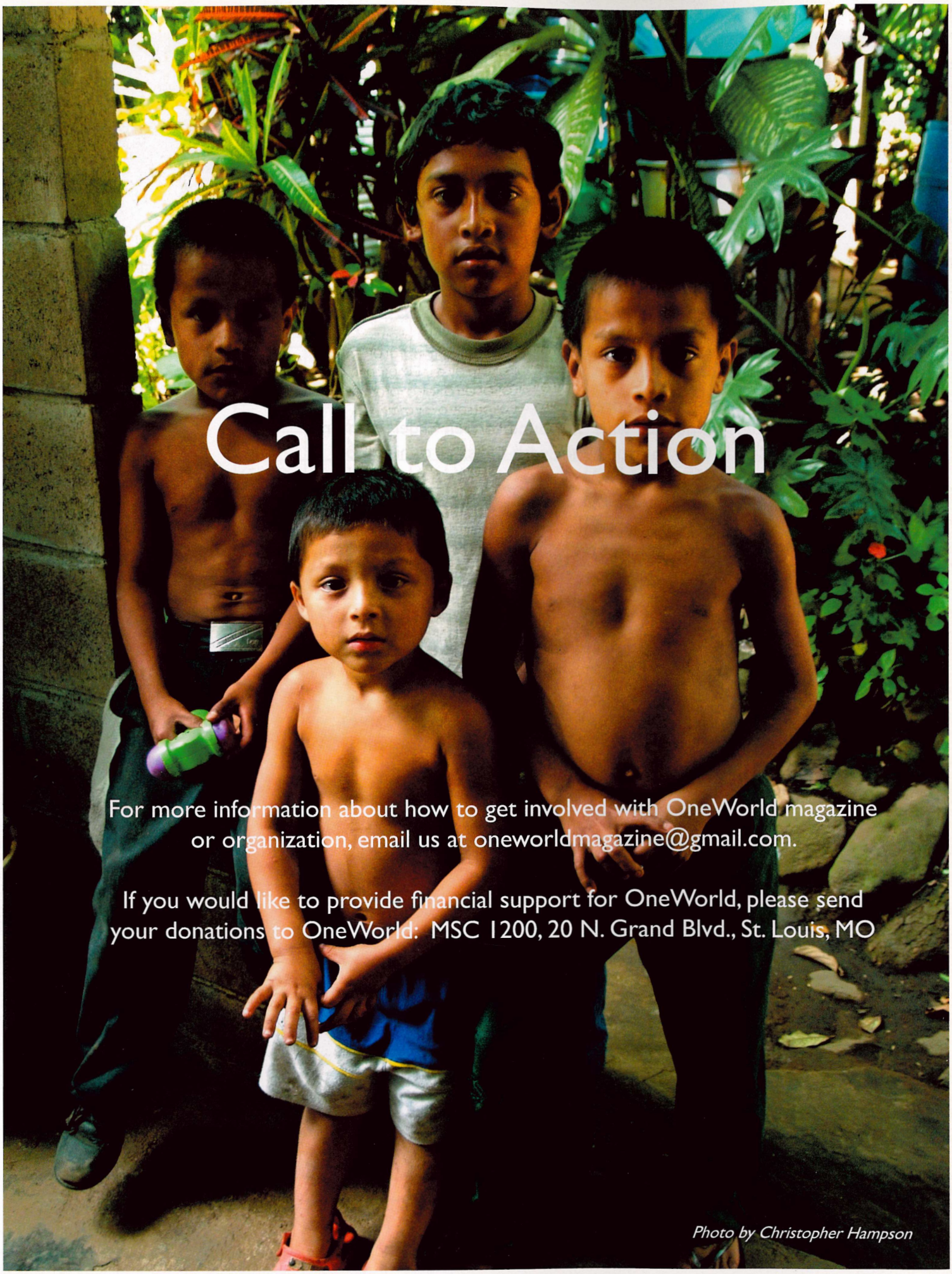
Solution:



The Sound of Silence

by Amenah Arther

He stays silent.
He stays silent as shadows form slowly in front of his eyes,
as he watches prison guards enter his 5' by 5' cell,
as they threaten him with their polished black metal guns,
He stays silent.
He stays silent as they undress his scarred, colored body,
as they taint his hearing with the sound of their cruel laughter,
as they satisfy their sadistic minds with the sight of his blood,
He stays silent.
He stays silent as he hears the whip of tight laced leather belts,
as they pierce his weathered skin with sharp army knives,
as they degrade the state of his mind and the purity of his soul,
He stays silent.
He stays silent as they tighten his rusted silver shackles,
as they tear off his soiled, stained, battered yellow pants,
as they rip open his insides and still the pain of his sore body
He stays silent.
He stays silent as his children ache for the sound of his voice,
as his children watch for his presence at their soccer games,
as his children lay awake at night praying for his safe return,
He stays silent.
He stays silent as he prays for death to befall his broken body
as his weary carcass weeps almost lifelessly on the floor,
as he hears the distant sounds of the media blur the lines between Abu Ghuraib and Guantanamo Bay,
He stays silent.
He stays silent as he awaits the crack of the bullet,
as he awaits the sting of the bullet,
as the guards raise their loaded guns,
He stays silent.



Call to Action

For more information about how to get involved with OneWorld magazine or organization, email us at oneworldmagazine@gmail.com.

If you would like to provide financial support for OneWorld, please send your donations to OneWorld: MSC 1200, 20 N. Grand Blvd., St. Louis, MO

Photo by Christopher Hampson